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OUT JULY 5TH
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ATM MAGAZINE

ISSUE 60 £3.49
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MC Det
13 years in the game

Dynamite MC
You Should Be Thankful!

Dillinja
Taking it to the next level

Shimon
"You need to do your own thing"

Keaton
" I like my music to make statements"

Dom & Roland
"People really love the breaks!"

Fifth Element
"No-one has really done it before..."

Pascal
" You lay the seeds and let them grow."

Inspektah Deck
"Its about your skills on the mic."

Plus: Spirit / Resonant Evil / Ratpack
Logistics / D Kay: Studio Tips
Sub Focus / Basic Ops / Meat Katie
Graff / Record, Club, Equipment & Game Reviews

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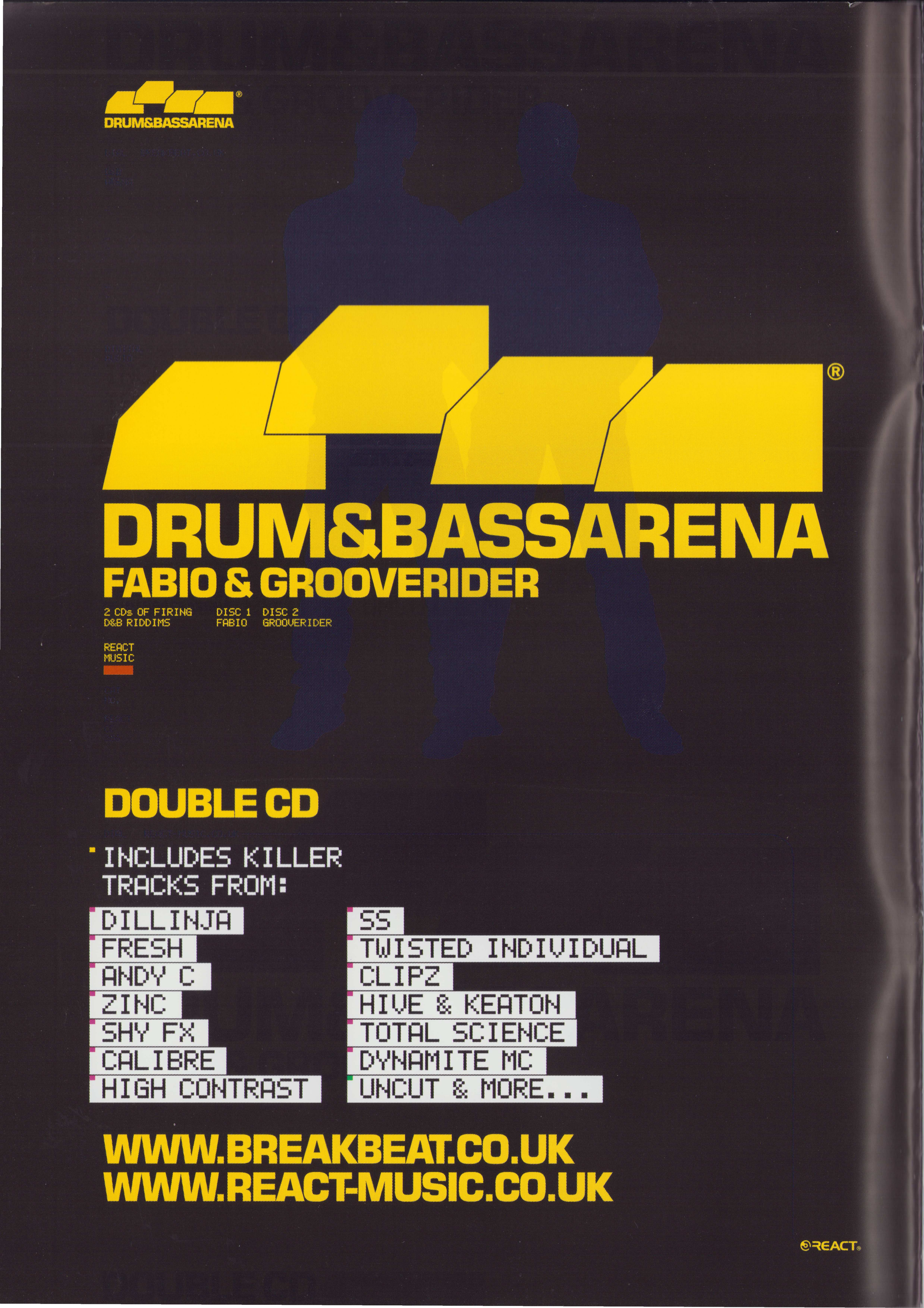

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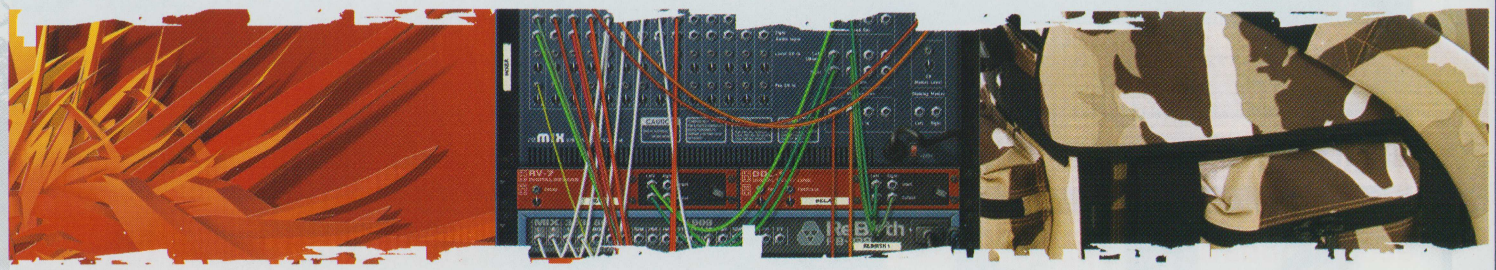

ATM issuesixty

Address: Po Box 5307, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 1TW, U.K.
Telephone: +44 [0]1702 540043
Facsimilie: +44 [0]1702 540053
Mobile: +44 [0]7767 684058
Website: www.atm-mag.com
Email: info@atm-mag.com
Subscriptions: tel: +44 [0]1702 540053 / subs@atm-mag.com

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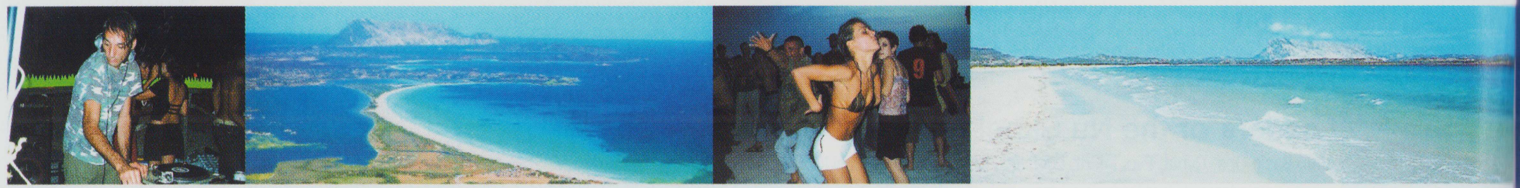
- DAILY DJ-SETS AT THE BEACH, IN BARS AND CLUBS



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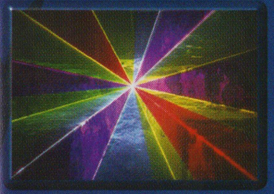

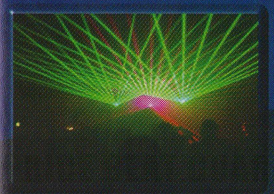

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INFRA028

J Majik & Wickaman

a] Scooby Doo feat. Kathy Brown

aa] Spycatcher

OUT NOW

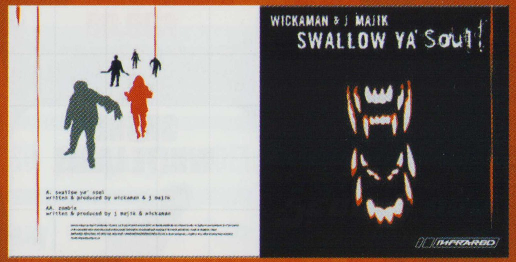
INFRA029

Probe & Sylo

a] Battle Royale

aa] Sparkplug

OUT NOW



INFRA030

Wickaman & J Majik

a] Swallow ya' Soul

aa] Zombie

INFRA031

Danny Wheeler & Subfocus a] Ghost aa] Lost Highway ...Out July 14th

MIX CD

WICKAMAN PRESENTS NIGHTVISION 2

DJ Wickaman & MC Fivealive present a 20-track mix feat. exclusive tracks & remixes by: J Majik, Wickaman, DJ Marky & XRS, Hazard, Danny Wheeler & Subfocus, and Futurebound. .... Out September 6th

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FALLING INTO D-KAY

As always things are looking good from this versatile producer, being the summer and all, means it's time for some more sing along sunshine vibes. All the news we got about this one is it involves a well known MC in the scene and should turn a few heads!? On the dancefloor tip the Austrian whizz kid is working on a part 2 for the massive 'Martians', which you know guarantee's some manic breaks and dark side bass! Elsewhere there's a 'heavy ragga steppa' ready to drop on Bingo (that recently featured on the 'Bingo Sessions' mix) with an epic string led b-side.

Illskillz recordings picks up the pace with D Kay & Epsilon's mighty 'Platinum' getting the re-rub, alongside a new bit made with NZ top dogs Concord Dawn. III004 is a remix of the twisted 'Soulshaker' by the darkside Netherlands trio, BSE. Also there's collaborations lined up with Moving Shadow and Headz based Calyx.

GOING ROUND IN CIRCLES

Kevin Gimble, founder of Circle artist management in Philadelphia, USA, has teamed up with Jon Gunshor to form 'Circle Recordings'. ST Holdings will be sorting the distribution side, and with some big names lined up for releases things are looking good. Karl K, Kaos and Jae Kennedy's disco stormer 'All Night Long' is the first release with a remix courtesy of Fierce and Matrix on the flip. There's another 4 releases to follow, which shows how this projects been a long time coming, and there's a load of different artists on board like D Kay & DJ Lee, Red One, Dylan, Tech Itch, Alliance, B Key, Muffler and Corrupt Souls. With a line up like this Circle looks set to do some serious damage in future months.

FRESH KAOS

Just cos its sunny it doesn't mean Fresh and Adam are gonna ease up on their world domination. July will see the release of the extremely long awaited 'Submarines' from Fresh, made during BC's Digital Nation days, with a stonking Pendulum re-lick on the flip. The next in line after that is a collaboration from the label top dogs (with a vocal from Adam F himself!), going on a summer vibe with the track 'Sun Goes Down' which will be released in August. DOA records was launched with Fresh's killer 'Floodlight'. The label is A&R'd by Radio 1 top dog Grooverider, so expect some heavy tracks on their way. Previously, you could only buy this track on the DOA website, but after a bit of an internet price war it's getting a shop release real soon.

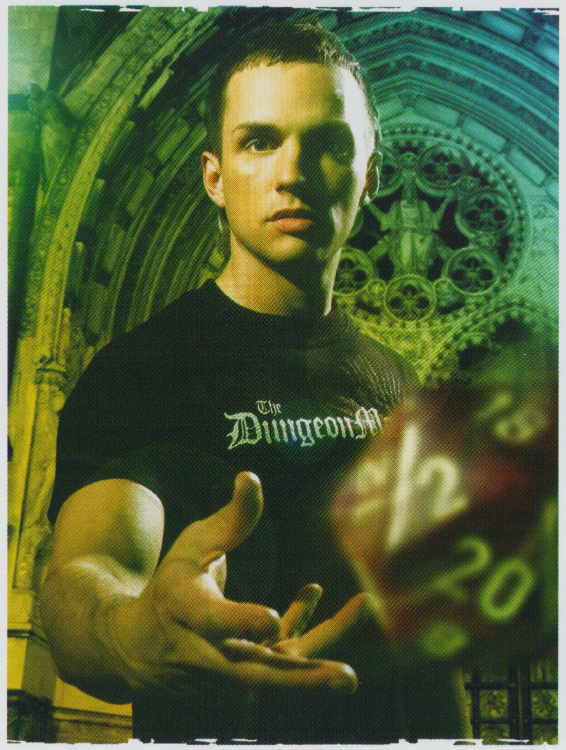
To make the transition from the summer into a dirty British winter easier, Breakbeat Kaos are gonna drop the labels first much talked about album. The five vinyl album will include contributions from Pendulum, Dillinja, Future Prophecies and Baron, as well as new tracks from the label bosses. You know this one's gonna be big! Baron's tune on the album will be the first of his new exclusive signing with B.B.K making the labels artist roster sicker than the Sars virus!

A BARON SUMMER

After the mighty 'Nosher' remix it seems like everyone wants a piece of the Oxford based producer/DJ. Baron returns to Virus to remix Ed and Op's smasher 'Kerbcrawler', with a release date planned around June. 'Monkey See, Monkey Do' gets a re-rub and will be out on CIA soon. Futurebound manages to collar Baron for a new mix of 'Blind Cobblers Thumb'. And Twisted Individual brings Baron onto Grid to remix Zen's potent 'Turnstyle', and this one's being getting caned by none other than the Grooverider.

DUNGEONS & DIESEL'S

Americas infamous Dieselboy releases his 8th album, and brings in some unusual artists as well as all the usual suspects. Speaking to ATM the man said; "For my 8th CD I tried to do something different from the mix CD norm. It was my goal to incorporate re mixes of well known producers in other genres of music. I thought it would be interesting to get those sounds placed into a drum and bass context, hence the remixes of artists like Sasha, BT, Wink and Tiesto. Call it an experiment if you will? At this point in my career I am interested in trying different things, for better or worse!" 'The Dungeon Master's Guide' should be in your shops now, check out our album reviews for more details.



RAMMING MP3'S

There's no doubt, piracy is here to stay, and the dance music industry is looking to find new ways to combat this and to move with the times. Hard house DJ, Ed Real has teamed up with BK, Nolan Shadbolt and techno legend Chris Finke to create www.trackitdown.net, the first MP3 download site dedicated to dance music, which is due to launch mid-June.

There's loads of labels signing up, like Fatboy Slim's Southern Fried and React, but the most important ones for you's lot has got to be the TOV group and the mighty Ram. The site promises to have promo's downloadable at 75% less than a 12", so all you CD kids can get product quickly and at a high quality. Not only this but they'll also have the chance to purchase exclusives produced only for the site as well as mixes from DJs such as Tayo, Functional Breaks, Darren Tate and T.O.V. DJs. This is early days for this kind of project, but if it works expect to see most of your favourite labels following suit.

KEEPING THINGS IN QUARANTINE

Fierce's quality over quantity label comes through with another strong release that should be in your shops about now. The 'Holding Room EP' features Hive's take on Fierce & Fresh's killer 'Innocence' collaboration, and also sees Fierce bringing in Keaton & Nitrox, C4C, and Break & Hydro all laying down tracks. As well as that there's a few killers in the pipeline. After giving a few tunes to Zinc for the 'Bingo Sessions' mix, the track 'Foodchain' has been getting a lot of interest. No release date has been secured for this, and the version given to Zinc isn't 100% complete, so watch this space!

OBSCENE RECORDINGS

Newly-weds Dylan & Robyn Chaos have got a new label. 'Obscene' by name. Obscene by nature with some sick tunes lined up from the likes of B-Key, Dylan, SKC, Tech Itch, Mason, Think Tank, John Rolodex, Silent Witness, Trust, Cartridge and Robyn Chaos.

MO' TROUBLE ON VINYL

The TOV camp are busy as ever, working on a new long player titled 'The Jump Off LP'. Featuring tracks from Baron, Twisted Individual, Brockie, Probe, Distorted Minds, Friction & Nu-Balance with more to be confirmed. Other news is the release of Drumsound & Bassline's 'Reverance' and Hold Tight's debut for the label 'Black Magic' with 'Crack Den' on the flip.

720º DEGREES

To hear sneak previews of forthcoming tracks check out 720-degrees.com, or to download high quality 720 wav/mp3s go to www.beatport.com. Also check for the '720 Revolution, part 1' mix CD that is in your shops now.

CRITICAL

Out now on Critical is a split 12" by Alias & Breakage 'Plum Fairy/Admit To Love'. In the pipeline is a collaboration from Break & Silent Witness called 'Dialling Out' with a remix from Calibre on the flip. Also look out for a recent Equinox set on 1Extra's archives that was recorded Sunday 15th June.

NEED SOME ADVISE?

Manchester's Sappo is relaunching his own Advisory Records, and the next two releases are 'Babylon boy/Version' and 'Soundboy/Ryde or Dye'.

NU DIRECTIONS

Nu Directions have got a string of releases for the summer season; Beta 2's 'Milan' should be hitting your shops soon, followed by 'Serious' from Danny C, and Mikrob & Bungle's 'Tempestade'. Nu Directions are also filling the airwaves in the Midlands on 99.2 District FM, from 6-8pm every Saturday.

TAKIN' IT EASY

Phantasy's not giving up one bit on his relentless assault on D&B! Expect a remix of the Fatman D collaboration 'No Liars'. New signings from New Zealand, The Upbeats, with a 12" that promises to be heavy! Phantasy, Shodan & Escher are lined up for an EP and Mayhem, Phantasy and Gurley are about to remix last summers' 'How It Is'. As if that wasn't enough already, there's also a remix of Phantasy's 1996 track '44 Mag' on its way.

THE RETURN OF MAC II

After what seems like a massive hiatus, Randall returns with the 11th release on his own Mac II label. Long time friend A Sides has done the mix honours of probably the labels' biggest release 'Time is the Fire' originally by Def Con. On the flip Cool Hand Flex delivers the rollin' 'Another Level'. Keep one eye open for this camp as they are destined for big things over the coming months. Distributed by ST Holdings.

DNAUDIO

Squire and Silent Witness line up a few releases for their imprint. Rising star Break links up with Hydro for 'Breathless / Deliverence' which has crept into the bags of Goldie, Fierce, BC and Trace to name but a few. The pair have also got a release on Quarantine in the pipeline. Following swiftly behind comes #4, a solo 12" from label head Silent Witness featuring the futuristic tones of 'Jump Gate', which is getting caned by Pendulum amongst others.

RENEGADE HARDWARE

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RH55 - OUT NOW
HARDWARE CHRONICLES VOL.3

A) 20/20 (CHASE & STATUS RMX) – FUTURE CUT
B) ESPIONAGE – BULLETPROOF
C) SOUL SNATCHER – TECH ITCH
D) ULTRA VIOLENCE – UNIVERSAL PROJECT

RH57 - RELEASED 28TH JUNE
THE RELOADED EP PART 1

A) FRAGGLE ROCK (RAIDEN RMX) - LOXY & DYLAN
B) CERTAIN SOUND (DRUMWORKZ VIP RMX) - PARADOX
C) GHETTO STYLE (EVOL INTENT RMX) - FUTURE CUT
D) STRAIGHT UP MENACE (VIP MIX) - LOXY & DJ INK

RH58 - RELEASED 26TH JULY
RAIDEN - UTOPIA EP

A) UTOPIA
B) REACTOR VIP
C) ARCH ANGEL
D) 6 FOOT DITCH (KRYPTIC MINDZ RMX)

WATCH OUT FOR "KING OF THE STREETS EP" - RESONANT EVIL, "THE JOINT EP" - DJ INK AND FORTHCOMING EP'S FROM LOXY & KEATON, UNIVERSAL PROJECT AND EVOL INTENT.

RENEGADE RECORDINGS

RR49 - OUT NOW
ILL LOGIC & RAF

A) ONE ON ONE
B) THE RIGHT WAY

RR50 - OUT NOW
RENEGADE ROLLERS VOL.4

A) VISIONARY DREAMER – JUNIOR CARTEL
B) CANT TAKE IT – BASIC OPERATIONS & WES DIXON
C) MAC 10 – HOLDTIGHT
D) SWEET LOVE – THE INSIDERS

RR51 - RELEASED 21ST JUNE
JUNIOR CARTEL

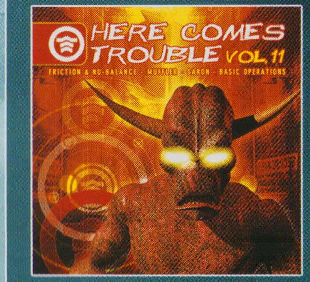
A) SOMEBODY
B) VISIONARY DEEPER (DUB MIX)

RR52 - RELEASED 19TH JULY
BASIC OPERATIONS

A) MOONRISE
B) A BETTER TOMORROW

WATCH OUT FOR FORTHCOMING RELEASES TO INCLUDE TRACKS FROM INSIDERS, REMIXES FROM NU:TONE & INFLUX UK PLUS THE RENEGADES OF FUNK LP VOL.3

TROUBLE ON VINYL



TOV61 - OUT NOW
HERE COMES TROUBLE VOL.11

A) TIDAL WAVE – FRICTION & NU BALANCE
B) PLATOON – MUFFLER
C) LAST MAN STANDING – GARON
D) GENETICS – BASIC OPERATIONS

TOV62 - OUT NOW
DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH

A) REVERENCE
B) NIGHTMARES

TOV63 - RELEASED 21ST JUNE
HOLDTIGHT

A) BLACK MAGIC
B) CRACK DEN

TOV64 - RELEASED 19TH JULY
CYBIN

A) NO MORE LIES
B) CODE RED

WATCH OUT FOR FORTHCOMING RELEASES TO INCLUDE THE JUMP OFF LP FEATURING TRACKS AND REMIXES FROM BARON, BROCKIE & ED SOLO, DISTORTED MINDZ, FRICTION, PROBE AND GENERATION DUB.

barcode

BAR01 - OUT NOW
RAIDEN

A) PITBULL ATTACK
B) MIND BOMBING

BAR02 - OUT NOW
EVOL INTENT

A) 7 ANGELS WITH 7 PLAGUES
B) CORRUPT COPS (REMIX)

BAR03 - RELEASED 5TH JULY
FISSION VS. KAISER

A) ORMUS
B) CRUEL INTENTIONS

BAR04 - RELEASED 2ND AUGUST
ROWDY TIME EP

A) 44 CALIBRE KILLER - RAIDEN
B) ROWDY TIME - CHASE & STATUS
C) HORNS & HALOS - EVOL INTENT
D) HELLS ANGEL - RESONANT EVIL

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the word on the street

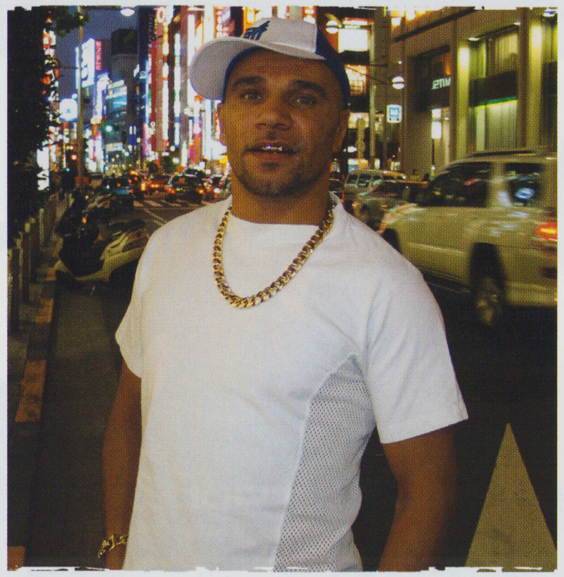
10 YEARS OF NODDING HEADZ

Metalheadz reaches it's tenth birthday, and trust us, this kids been eating his greens! There's a lot of new projects being planned, including some albums and an 18 artist collaboration, but your gonna have to wait till later in the year for the final details on those. Big news is a rumour that the Metalheadz Sessions has found a new home, with a monthly residency at the Angel Carling Academy in Brixton. The 800 capacity will be home to a Friday night party once a month from Goldie and his crew, and doors will open at 11 till 4 because they're "all getting too old" at Headz!!

The Metalheadz website is picking up momentum, and the problems with the forum are sorted out. The shop will be up and running in a few months and will feature a range of 'Headz clothing (enough to dress your mum from head to toe in!), and also merchandise like slipmatts, jewellery and anything else you can get a logo on! Check out our next issue for an exclusive on the clothing. Goldie will be releasing his first single on Headz for a long time, and although its not due to be released for some time, expect to hear 'Say You Love Me' getting rinsed on dubplate worldwide.

IBIZA JUNGLE

The White Isle gets the Drum n Bass and Old School invasion courtesy of Helter Skelter, and this time joined by the infamous Innovation. As usual Es Paradis is where the beats and bass will be flying, and judging by the popularity of this night last summer, it's gonna be big baby! The main arena will be a fusion of D&B and Old Skool, with the likes of Ratpack, Nicky Blk Mkt, Mickey Finn and Slipmatt gracing the decks. Room 2 will be hosted by Plastik who will be rinsing a blend of funky grooves, club classics, and acid house with residents Tristan Ingram, Eddie Lock, Dermot C and guests.



SOULFUL BEHAVIOUR

Defunked turn to Paris based FX909 for their next release; 'Element of Life/Lady'. The Frenchman is picking up props left, right and centre at the moment, and with releases on Media, Jerona Fruits and his own Close Combat imprint, 2004 looks set to be a good year for him.

Hot on the heels of this release will be another 12" courtesy of Oxford dons, Total Science. 'Good Old Days' is receiving dubplate action from Fabio, Goldie, Bryan Gee and our very own Frenzic, to name a few. This one's got a release date for mid-July, but for all you promo whores out there check out Defunked's website (defunked.co.uk) where you can purchase promo releases. ATM top dog Frenzic has just completed Defunked's latest mix project, 'Soulful Behaviour 2'. The mix CD will be coupled with a four pack vinyl release featuring 4 new and exclusive tracks from Carlito, Total Science, Fellowships and Commix. The mix CD will feature 4 further exclusive tracks, courtesy of Laroque, Kaleb, CLS & Wax, and Jazzistico & Subsync. To hear a 20 min preview of the mix check out Defunked's website.

"BINGO!"

Bingo's picking up momentum at the moment with a string of releases and projects. 'Steppin Stones' gets followed up by a remix of Zinc's 'Departure' by BC bad man, D Bridge. The flip brings in new talent Raw Q with a funky bass guitar track called 'Vital Soul' which has been receiving a lot of action recently. 'Bingo Sessions Volume 1' mixed by Zinc and DJ Friction, and featuring Dynamite MC and SP, should be in your shops, or in your CD player at home if you've got any sense.

Also planned for late June is three different versions of 'Flim', the unmissable track with Slarta Jon's vocals that has been smashing dancefloors round the world for a while on dub. The first is a vocal and dub dnb version from the label boss, the second is a Calibre vocal and dub, and the third is a 4 track breaks/underground EP with mixes from Zinc, Horsepower and Whizzbit. Covering all the styles that Zinc produces 'Bingo Sessions Part 2' is on the way for all you breaks/garage heads with Rinse FM's Slimzee behind the decks. Bo!

REACHING FOR THE AQUASKY

There's a lot of bits in the pipe from the Bournemouth trio, both D&B and breaks wise. On their Sonix imprint the next track will be 'Atlanta' with Garon's 'Fo Shizzle' on the flip, followed by 'No Sell Out/Radioactive' by Crystal Clear. Aquasky have also got their first release lined up on Bukem's Good Looking called 'In The Zone' which should hit your shops in September. Also check for 'Hi-Life (feat Sista)' on Moving Shadow out now. I don't think these lads sleep, cos the breaks releases are just as relentless! Gridlok has got a piece called 'Twisted Horns' lined up on Aquasky's Passenger. Infecto and Factor E have also got releases lined up, alongside a bit from the label bosses 'Wheels Of Steel'. Also check out releases on 777. For more info click aquasky.co.uk where you can check out their weekly drum n bass/breaks show.

LET BATTLE COMMENCE

DMC/Technics roll out their infamous comp for 2004 with heats going off around the country. Last years results went; 1st - DJ Quest, 2nd - Blakey (the youngest DMC finalist) and 3rd - DJ Dare Devil. Turntablist hopefuls will be battling it out all over the UK before the final showdown. The UK finals will be taking place at the Shepherds Bush Empire on July 3rd. The finalist will go through to the world battle royale, where they will test their styles against old masters and new blood alike, which will be held at the Carling Apollo in Hammersmith on the 4th and 5th Sept. Look out for some dates of the tour where former World Champions DJ Craze and Ca$h Money will flex their skills. Other guests lined up for tour dates include UK Hip-Hop's finest, Blak Twang, and also the turntablist Hip-Hop/Drum n Bass crew, The Mixologists. Check out dmcworld.com for more info and entry details.

RAW MONKEYS

Rawthang, Monkey & Large and a few others are the men behind Norway's premier D&B club, Oxygen. London based MC Stirlin has been picking up the mic over there on a regular basis, and has also stepped in the studio with Monkey & Large. The Oslo lads have started up 'Coded Recordings' with the first release already in the shops.

BARCODE

Barcode picks up momentum with a string of releases representing the darker side. Fission & Kaiser are next up with 'Ormus' and 'Cruel Intentions' followed by 'The Rowdy Time EP'. PSI Dream and Mech Warrior are behind the 5th release for the 'harder than Hardware' label, and future artists include Spor, Chase & Status and Evol Intent.

DETONATE GO STEALTH

Nottingham's biggest force in Jungle, Detonate, celebrates it's 5th Birthday and moves out of home. Anyone who lives around Nottingham will have heard of the new club Stealth, that gets ready to open its doors soon. After starting it up at Deluxe, and moving through Dubble Bubble, Beetroot and more recently The Bomb, Detonate get things going on May 28th with a Renegade Hardware night. The all-night Detonation will remain at The Ballroom, and live events will still be at Rock City.

IT AIN'T TOO LOUD

Ever got back from clubbing with ringing/dull ears? ("yeah, nuff times mate!") Well, you've seriously damaged your ears. The RNID, the largest charity representing deaf and hard of hearing people, has recently published results from a survey on UK clubs. Some venues they found that noise was so loud on the dancefloor (at 110dB(A)) that it was the equivalent to an aircraft taking off!!

RNID's campaign 'Don't Lose The Music' has a focus on making clubbing safer on your ears. This doesn't mean pikey quiet systems, cos they know what us bass-heads are like! They want clubs to provide clear information about sound levels and to give clubbers the option of earplugs if you want them. Check dontlosethemusic.com

ED RUSH & OPTICAL

The mighty Virus duo have got a mix CD getting ready to drop late summer through React music. Expect a beefy line-up including Virus dubs, classics, and remixes as well as a load of tracks from other labels that they're feeling. The mix will be accompanied by a DVD that will be jam packed with Virus news and features. Optical's gonna drop some studio tips, and the pair will be interviewed about the legend that is Virus, and heads from in the scene, like Andy and Fierce, will be chatting about the label, and there's gonna be tour footage from the pair.

DOPE AMMO

The Oxford based crew are keeping busy with a big release schedule, and more nights on the horizon. Up next is a remix project that will be spread across four 12's. All the classic Dope Ammo tracks will get a refresh with artists like Total Science, Futurebound and Rascal & Klone onboard already, as well as DA's usual suspects. They also plan to bring in a number of up and coming's like Xample & Sol, APB, and Dis & Frenic who will feature on a bonus CD, if not the vinyl, that will come free along with a mix CD with the fourth vinyl offering. Other news from the camp is their range of T-Shirts that will be available soon, and also their events which are picking up momentum.

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LEARN TO SCRATCH WITH A&H

Allen & Heath have hooked up with D&B Arena to present a series of scratch shorts. 2002's youngest DMC champion, DJ IQ, will be putting A&H's new Xone:02 to the test with a 6 part lesson covering rubs and scratch plates, cutting and chirping, tears and transforms, crabs and juggling, and the mixer and flares. Allen & Heath are fast becoming the industry standard for mixers, with top club The End singing their praises, so if you want to check out this sick new piece of kit in action, or brush up on your skills, go to www.breakbeat.co.uk

MORE FUN IN THE SUN

For any of you that missed Innovation's Drum n Bass exodus to Spain, or for those that went and spent too much time mashed indoors, you've got another chance to top up your tan whilst brocking to your favourite beats. 2004 will definitely go down as the year when the sun got injected into Drum n Bass, with Innovation's Spanish inquisition, Jungle's conquer of Ibiza firmly set in place, and now this new project. Sun and Bass is a collaboration of organisations based across Europe and will be rolling from the 4th to the 12th of September at one of Europe's most beautiful beach resorts, Sardinia in Italy. The concept behind the event is to represent the European Drum n Bass scene with artists from over 11 different countries on the ones and the twos. Formation's infamous 'World Of Drum n Bass' tour will be stopping off at the hotspot for one of the 7 nights, with none other than SS, Grooverider, Pendulum, Bailey, Kenny Ken, Influx UK and MCs Warren G & Biggie. Representing the UK will be our very own Frenzic, Audio, Mackie, Nu:tone and more. The event is aimed at all of Europe, so expect a mad mix of different names and faces. The line-up is ever growing, and there's a range of packages to suit, so for more info check out www.sunandbass.com.

THAT'S A PROPER RAP

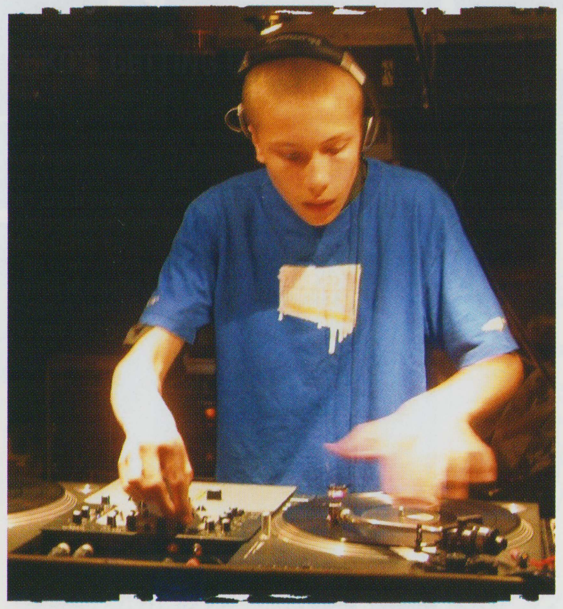
The queen of D&B is back! DJ Rap has hooked up with System Recordings to re-launch her heavy imprint, Proper Talent. With next to no releases in the last few years Rap hooked up with Danny C for the aptly titled 'The Riff' (check the reviews) which should hit the shops by the end of June. This year she celebrates the first 10 years of her career, and the re-launch of her Proper Talent label, and the release of the mix compilation 'Propa Classics - Vol 1'. The album features two exclusive new tracks and 13 of the best and rarest dancefloor anthems that forged her reputation as the 'first lady of jungle'. Rap has been chillin' in the States for some time now, producing breakbeat and starring in a Twix advert. She's talking of getting the label up and running again, so keep your fingers crossed lads, we could have our favourite junglist back behind the decks. Other news is the launch of a house label, called Improper Talent.

EASTSIDAZ

A-Sides has got a lot lined up at the moment with a release on Valve, a collaboration with Calibre and Marky, and a piece for Digital getting worked on. On his own imprint Eastside there's 3 of his own tunes (Unity/Apache Pride, Shine Light and Payback/Danger) either in your shops or on their way. As well as this he's bringing in some fresh artists like Lydx & Yoneda (Japan), Mok & Rusta (USA) and DJ Andy & Mikrob (Brazil), all with releases forthcoming on Eastside or Fuze. There's also a couple of bits courtesy of Break, who seems to be getting around like an Essex girl!
As if all this wasn't enough A-Sides is touring Canada, America, Japan, Europe, Brazil and Australia, so expect to see him soon wherever you live!

BASSBIN

The Irish crew have a few releases lined up for summer. Breakage's 'Disco 45 rmx' is next up with a Zero Tolerance Re-rub of 'Naphta' on the flip. This will be followed by 'Out Of Reach' from Breakage, as well as the eagerly anticipated 'So Mars' hybrid. Accident & Emergency's summer vibes 'Flyest Gangster' should be in your shop soon. The crew are putting together an album which will be spread across a double pack vinyl and CD, keep 'em peeled.



GLOBAL GATHERING 2004

Its summertime, and you know what that means… Global Gathering! 29th July 2004 is looking as relentless as ever with 35,000 people lined up to get deep down and dirty in a field. Highlights to this year include an 'Extreme Urban Park' which will feature some pro skaters and BMX riders, with Plus One and Mr Thing providing the beats. There's also gonna be the world's only mobile roller coaster, and a comedy club for when you've had enough of your mates pony gags! As always Accelerated Culture take care of the D&B, and there's all the usual suspects, as well as Killa Kela and his 'Spit Kingdom' project which smashed it at Homelands. The summer just got hotter!

ECKO'S GETTING UP

New York's biggest hip-hop clothing and culture brand is going digital. Ecko Unltd are joining with Atari to bring you the first game, called 'Getting Up', to 'truly capture the look, attitude, action or sound of urban culture' (cough, Tony Hawk? Cough!). The game is going to run on the design strengths of the Ecko camp, that established their brand as arguably the biggest hip-hop and urban player, as well as Atari's experience in gaming, so expect mad colours, bad-ass playaz, and blunts, bitches and forty's. It's been a dream of Marc Ecko's for a long time, and speaking on the project he commented; "This game will be genre-defining. Revolutionary. We will put the flag in the ground of popular culture with 'Getting Up'". Expect a grimey sound track to match, but before you get to excited and run to your shop cash in hand, this one isn't gonna see the light of day until June, 2005!!

INNERGROUND GO CYBER

XRS & Marky's imprint hits the net with the usual features like news on forthcomings, DJ listings for the two, and Innerground audio. To celebrate the launch they will be giving away free downloads of the track 'Backspin'. Go to innergroundrecords.com

LIFE AFTER ODYSSEY

Hot on the heels of the track that is the mighty 'Odyssey', Drumsound & Bassline Smith are getting ready to drop their LP on Technique, expect them to flex their muscles on various styles and flavours of D&B. Dubs floating around include 'Crossfire Danger', 'Bust It Up' and the comedy titled 'A Pulp Dancer Called Eternity'. The album will be released on four 12's and a mix CD will follow. There's also releases on TOV and W.A.R in the pipeline.

FIFTH ELEMENT

Fifth Element's "Druhop Music" LP is finally complete with a release due around autumn. The next single from the LP will be the title track "Druhop Music" with remix work from Shy FX and other special guests. Also look out for Architecture 18 which see's DJ Kontrol with drop 'Born/Plasma'.

SKIBA-DANGER

Skibadee has got an album in the pipeline that is picking up momentum. The double-time MC will be spitting over his two favourite beats, Hip-Hop and Drum n Bass alongside a host of guests from the scene on production duties. Other Masters of Ceremony joining Skib's to drop some lyrical bombs, include the other three Professionals (Fearless, Shabba, Det) to name but a few. The album is due for September, and chances are there's gonna be some unexpected guests popping up between then, so watch this space.

FABIO & GROOVERIDER

Fabio and Grooverider have surprisingly never produced a commercial mix CD together in all their years of mixing side by side. The dangerous duo are known worldwide for smashing dancefloors and dropping the freshest dubs around so don't expect anything less from this killer mix care of Drum & Bass Arena and React. Expect fresh tracks from Valve, Prototype and Ram to name only a few. The double CD should hit your shop by the end of June. Their infamous show on Radio 1 will be inviting two of Drum n Bass's biggest producers over the coming weeks, the Irishman that is Calibre, and none other than the king of bass, Dillinja. As well as this they will be getting treatment from the mighty Hospital Records who will profile in their label of the month feature.

HAPPY B'DAY HARDWARE

Good news for all you Hardware heads who like your beats filthy and loud! On 2nd August the award winning label and promoter has a jolly old knees up to celebrate it's 7th birthday at London's premier club, The End. Expect the usual suspects as well as some darkside guests. On the release side of ting's the 'Reloaded EP' should be hitting your shops very soon as well as Raiden's eagerly awaited 'Utopia EP'.

NWDNB.CO.UK

One of the major online success stories's of late, North West Drum and Bass continues to go from stregth to stregnth. A dazzling array of producers, DJs, promoters and the raving public make their opinions known on the forums and its definitely helping to accelerate the growth of the scene throughout the north west and beyond!

TEEBEE

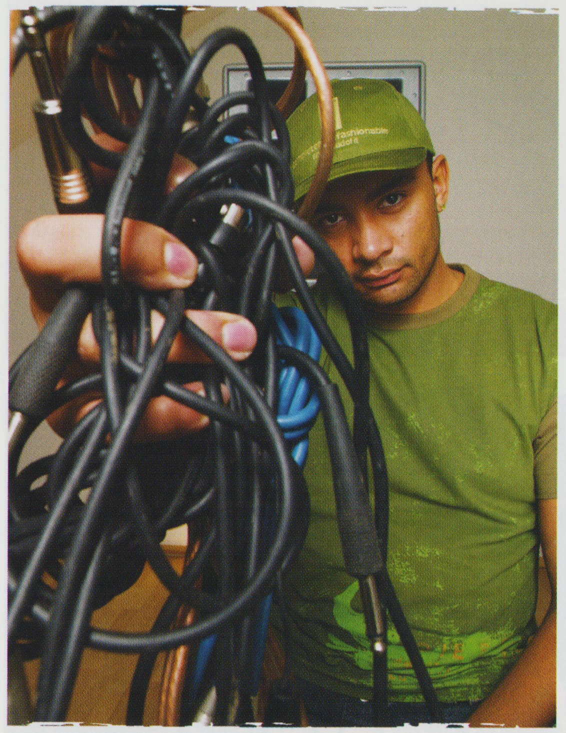
Norway's no.1 is getting ready to drop one of his biggest projects to date, with his long player planned for release around September. The album will come on either 4 or 5 pieces, and a double CD, and will be released on Subtitiles in connection with Photek productions. Watch this space.

On the Subtitles side there's releases lined up from Chris SU, Fracture & Neptune, Fanu, Orion, Corrupt Souls, Pacific, Noir and Ionic. Remix business from C4C, Simon Bassline Smith, Total Science, Calyx and more, so expect a lot of pieces due for the latter end of 2004. Future Prophecies will be releasing an album on 2 EP's, called 'Warlord Rising'. As well as all this there's a mix CD courtesy of DJ Form and a 2nd installation of Teebee's mix project due.

TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

The Fortress Studios, home to the first Technicality all-nighter, has been shut down by Hackney Council. The next full night of rabid breaks is planned for late October, and talks are happening to secure a new venue as this goes to print, so watch this space.

Other news is the competition to win a set at Technicality. Get your 20 min mixes to Inperspective Recs, PO Box 27545, London, SE4 4YS, before 30th June, and cross your fingers!! For all junglists across the pond who like it heavy, Inperspective embark on a US/Canada tour spanning over September.



G2 & GAIN

G2 carries on it's darkside onslaught for the summer season. Bringing in talent worldwide they have lined up Slovenia's Markoman for a release, the Lord Of The Rings inspired 'Minas Tirith/Dope' is due soon. Resonant Evil have got 'All That's Visible' with 'Know The Future' lined up. On Gain they've got a release from a producer that truly represents global Drum n Bass. Magna Karta hail from South Africa, and have a release due titled 'Punk Jazz/Junk Step'. After that there is a release from Spor & Blitz under their collective guise Final reckoning, with 'Ivory Tower/Tangent Universe'.

ALL VALVES FIRING

There's big things happening from the lords of the bass. Firstly there's a retrospective album near completion with a mix of old and new, with tracks like 'Angels Fell', 'Tudor Rose', 'In The Grind' and 'Acid Trak' amongst many more. There's a killer remix lined up of the legendary 'Acid Trak' getting brought up to date by Lemon, whilst the sublime 'Sovereign Melody' is gonna get the re-lick treatment (although the re-mixer is not confirmed yet). 'All The Things' and 'Forsaken Dreams' feature on the album, and are in the shops now quickly followed by 'In The Grind'.

After this there will be a new artist album from the camp, taking on the philosophy that Beatz runs on, giving the younger generation of producers the opportunity to get out there. This album will include contributions from TC, Miracle, Craggs & Parallel Forces, Strider, Friction, A-sides and the label boss's themselves. This should be hitting your shop around September time, on CD (including a mix) and vinyl double packs.

If all this isn't enough for you, Lemon D is working on a big artist album for the end of the year. The album is gonna feature a number of guests including Killa Kela, Dynamite, Bryan Gee, and Krust as well as many more to be confirmed. Next on Test will be 'Pharaohe's Order/Tomorrow People' by an unconfirmed artist. Finally, Valve will be flexing more styles than just pure dancefloor destruction, so watch out for a whole host of new aliases to represent these different vibes!

PLAYAZ - GET THE FUK UP!

By the time you read this Pascal's 'Playaz Lounge EP' should be in your shops waiting for you. Pascal has also finished mixing 'True Playaz In The Mix Vol 3' which will feature all the recent Playaz material, and will be available around July. Ganja has a Hazard piece out now called 'Get The Fuk Up/Wonkey Donkey' and the rewind receiving dubplate 'Gimme The Girl' should be in your shops now or soon.

The big ting on Ganja is the 'Dubplate Killers LP' which is getting put together as we speak. The album will feature all the usual suspects and some guests. As if that ain't enough, Hype will be teaming up with the one Andy C for the next Fabric Live Drum n Bass project. Gotta feeling that ones gonna be big!!!

WANNA BE THE BEST?

Best In The East is launching a monster competition for you rising stars with a final held at Club M in Newmarket on the 21st August. With Blackmarket Records and ATM onboard you know this one's gonna be big. There can be only one, and whoever performs best in the categories of presence/style, technical ability, tune selection and crowd response, will win £250's worth of Blackmarket vouchers, £150 clothes vouchers, a Blackmarket record and goodie bag, a years subscription to Drum n Bass's finest publication and a goodie bag full of whatever we rustle up or get sent. As well as all this you get a 2 hour set on Drumandbassworldwide.com, a set at the winners party where you'll step up after none other than Andy C (shit warm up eh?!), and check this, 2 weeks all expenses paid DJing holiday in Egypt. Judges on the night will be Nicky Blackmarket, Frenzic, Captain and Rips, and more. You gotta be over 18 to enter, and all entries must be in by the 12th July on CD or Tape without MC's to "I'm The Best In The East" c/o Brainz & Direction, 48 Queen St, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 8EX with all your contact details.

KENNY KEN

Kenny Ken is preparing for somewhat of an onslaught of beats over the coming months. Expect 12's from Supply & Demand and DJ Mistify soon. Along with Digital's remix of the mighty 'Everyman', and Kenny's smashing 'Ragga Rave'. In the pipeline are remixes of 'Evil Streets', including a Friction mix. A Kenny Ken mix for Congo Natty, plus some heavy new Capital J bits.

RENEGADE ROLLS ON

The weather's getting hot so you know it's the perfect time for some soulful summer vibes. After receiving a lot of support from those in the know, 'Renegade Rollers Pt 3' is ready to drop, and looks set to be the most popular out of the series. Next up on Renegade Recordings is a release by Junior Cartel, followed by a Basic Op's piece and then the next instalment of the 'Renegades of Funk' which will include Hold Tight, Tronik 100, Stress Level & TC1 tracks, as well as remixes from Nu:tone and The Insiders.

BIOLOGICAL BUSINESS

Fatman D and Nu Breed partner in crime, Shortston, are set to launch their new imprint alongside the Jersey mafia that is Terminal State. 'Biological Beats' first release is from DJ SS with 'Stick It Up' which has been getting mad props recently, alongside another new track called 'Dedication' from the Formation Don. Expect tracks from the label heads alongside guest offerings from this fresh label.

JOHN B LONG PLAYA

Jungle's biggest eccentric gets ready to drop his second LP, titled 'John B In:transit'. This album from the classically trained producer covers a variety of styles including, yeah you guessed it, 80's electro! John B has smashed Drum n Bass with legendary tracks like 'Up All Night', but has also worked on Oakenfold's trance label Perfecto, and is even rumoured to be working on a remix of Toni Basil's 'Hey Mickey'! All these different influences shine through on the album.

FRESH DIMENSIONS

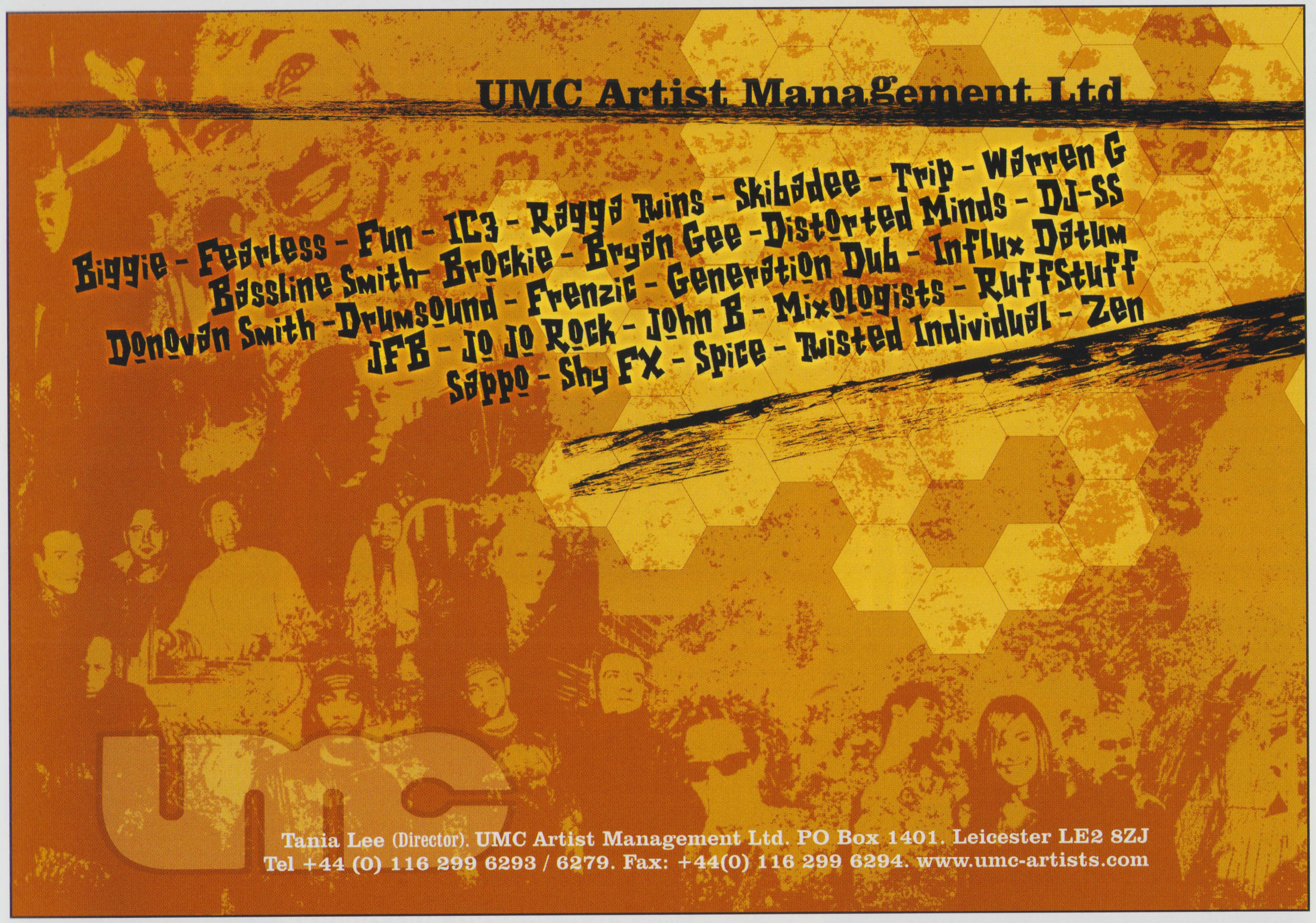
The first Fresh Dimensions hip-hop bootleg release got clubs jumping on both sides of the Atlantic with its cheeky cut and paste party vibe. In shops now Fresh Dimensions 2 'Hip-Hop Is Ching' b/w 'Sunshine Steppa' and Fresh Dimensions 3. 'Oochy Candy' b/w 'Dirty Milkshake' continue the labels policy of making essential dancefloor bombs for hip-hop party DJs.

METROPOLIS

After the stunning lockout success of their all-nighter with D&B Arena, Metropolis continue to turn up the temperature by running first and last Friday of each month at Phoenix. Over the summer months the residents Mark OD & Prophecy keep thing ticking over with guest slots from ATM boss Frenzic & Nicky Blackmarket before all hell breaks loose in September with Andy C, Hype, Friction, Bailey, Mampi Swift, Shy FX confirmed and things with Prototype and Planet V in the pipeline. Metropolis are making Manchester an essential destination on the drum and bass map!

NEW VIBE

In the shops now is Humanoid's club smash 'Tibetan Mist', Bailey has been regularly roasting this on his 1Xtra show. The follow up 'Psycho' / 'Bubbler' from Neurotix is due in July followed in August by the long awaited 'New Dawn' (Sappo rmx) and The X's 'Its On You'. Contact New Vibe: 07770 601 731.



the word on the street

GOING HOME IN AN AMBULANCE

Nu:Tone's little bro Logistics has been signed to Hospital, and with releases like 'Together' you know its not a case of insisting that his little bruva's aloud to play! For his next release check out the 'Sound Of Cambridge EP' which looks set to smash it (see the reviews section).

The incredible taster of High Contrast's new album 'High Society', that is 'Twilights Last Gleaming' is on full release now. If not there are limited promos on Hospitals website, and if the quality of this track is anything to go by High Contrast's long player, which is due September, is gonna be big! The Hospital therapy continues with a DVD of their live show from the Jazz Café, and tour footage, which should be in all good record stores now (check reviews).

ROLLING IN FORMATION

Leicester's #1 keep thing's moving and shaking over the summer season. Influx Datum has signed his '2 Million & Rising' LP penned for release later this year. 'Ghost People (Take My 2004)' giving you a little taster. The big bad boss rolls on with his S-Files project with part 3 (For Those Who Can Handle/Tribalism) in your shops now, and Case File 4 getting ready to drop on a triple vinyl format. This'll be followed with a CD mix which will feature a DVD with footage from 10 years of touring, with all the big dogs dropping lyrics.

The mighty Jazz & Bass series is brought back to life for the summer vibes. Sister label New Identity drop the third in the series with a 3 part vinyl set featuring tracks from Baron, Twisted, SS & Zen, Pleasure, Unknown Factor, Gen Dub and Jersey's finest, Terminal State, with a double CD to follow. In the Formation pipeline there's a new release from Zen, entitled 'Flying Cups' with 'Conundrum' on the flip. Always on the hunt for international talent, SS has signed up a trio from Italy called S.M.O.K.E., with their 'Cyclops' release.

Reformed bring in new skool blazer Crystal Clear for a July release. Hot on it's heels will be the second 'Reformatted EP' with tunes from Twisted, alongside Influx UK & Child Support, Gen Dub and Smoke. As if this wasn't enough to clean you out there will be a 'Straight Out Of Leicester' long player with all the usual suspects as well as APB and Gooree.

The 'World Of Drum n Bass' is back on the road for the summer touching down in Germany (Hamburg & Manheim), Estonia, the beautiful Sardinia (Italy) for 'Sun & Bass' as well as the not so sunny destinations of Sheffield, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle and Edinburgh.

FABRIC HIT THE BREAKS

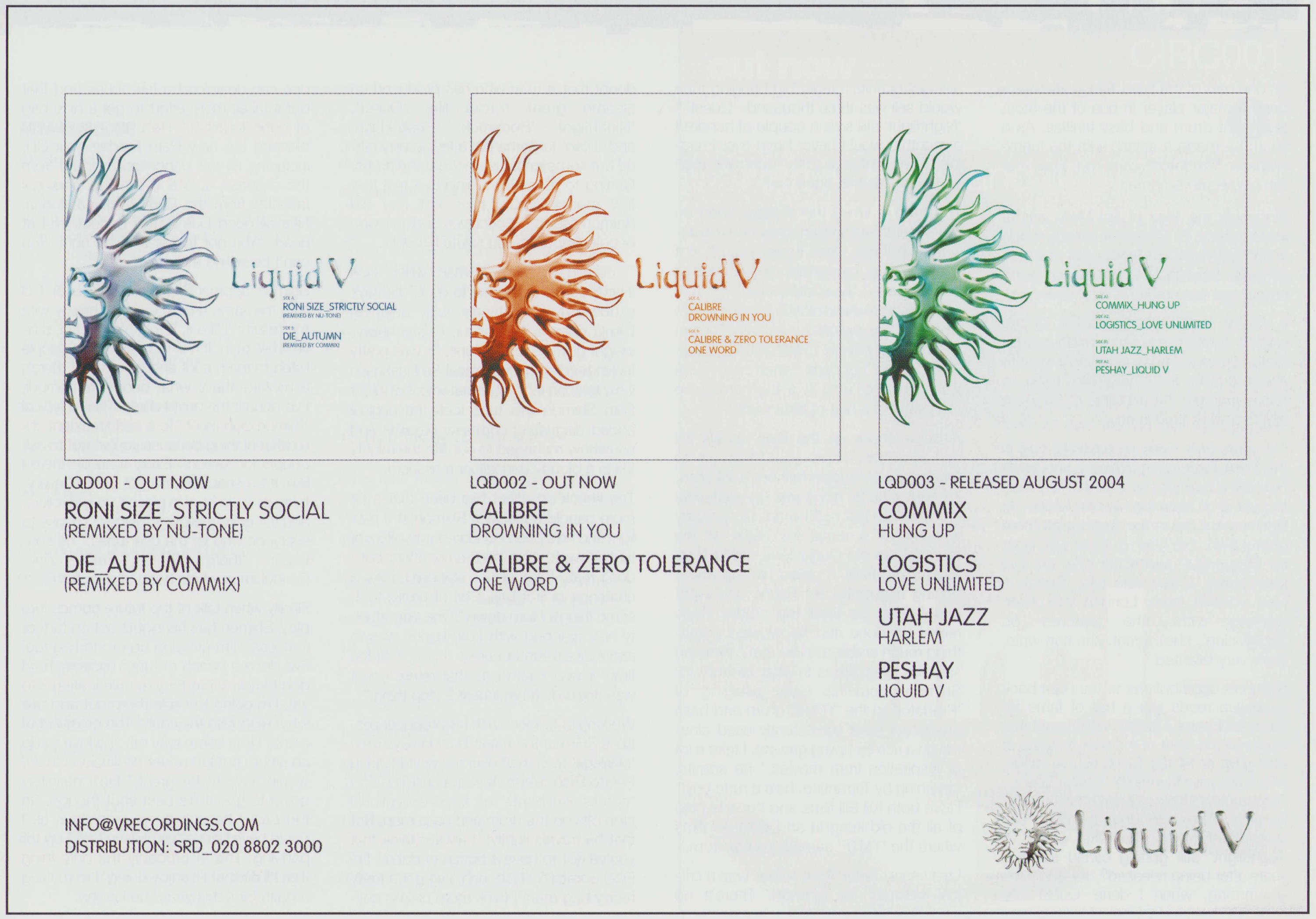
Fabric is going Breaks mad with a new night hosted by the Plump DJ's. Things will be getting spooky on Friday 13th of August when the Plumps launch their new night 'Eargasm', which will be banging out Breaks across all 3 rooms of London's finest. The all-star line-up will include the Plump's, Meat Katie, Rennie Pilgrim, The Freestylers and Kraft Kuts to name a few. For all you pure junglists worrying that Breaks is gonna take over, Eargasm will be running quarterly across the year, so keep your eye on the listings.

THUNDEROUS BUSINESS

Calyx and Kontrol are startin their own label called 'Thunderous Audio' which from these two sounds like a name to fit. The first release will be 'Drums Take Control' and 'Set Me Free'. The label will be used for their own releases as well as bringing in some thunderous guests.

12TH ROUND

Manchester's 12th Round Records (12thround.co.uk) is a label making moves with forthcoming beats from DJ Deval & Si S-Man Smith. Find them hosting a North West drum & bass showcase at this years Beachbombing festival in Barcelona. They also have a host of DJ / Producers and MCs inc Prophecy (New Vibe), Mark OD (ATM), Deval (12th Round) Sol 'n' Xample (Mix 'n' Blen) and MC Tonn Piper on the books. For bookings mail mike@12thround.co.uk



As one part of the Ram Trilogy, Shimon's been a major player in one of the most significant drum and bass trinities. As a youth he made a splash with the jungle hotness 'Predator' sampling from the film of the same name.

Alongside the likes of Ant Miles and of course Andy C, Shimon's already made a lifetimes worth of stone-cold classics, although you get the feeling he hasn't always got the credit his craft deserves.

If you've lived in the shadow of the world's number one drum and bass DJ there comes a time when: "you'll need to at some point to do your own thing, to prove yourself," he explains. At 28 years old, Shimon's time is now.

For years he's been an essential cog in the Ram Records machinery and while he's still a firm part of the Ram fam he's focussing on securing his own future. "At the moment I'm in the studio a bit more on my own, I've been in there with Spar for 'Mysterons' and 'Cold Killa' but I've been doing a few solo bits. There's a new vocalist from London I've been working with, she featured on 'Nightvision', she's great, she can write, she's very talented."

Shimon's contributions to the Ram back catalogue reads like a hall of fame for drum and bass / jungle, with music that captured the spirit of the time on slabs of vinyl. Out of all the tunes you've made, which are your favorites? "Chase Scene', 'Bodyrock', 'Titan', 'Quest', 'Nightflight," he says. And how does it feel to see always-in-the-box tunes like 'Quest' & 'Nightflight' still getting caned some 8 years after being released? "It's absolutely amazing, when I done 'Quest' the amount of units a really big banging tune would sell was three thousand. 'Quest' / 'Nightflight' still sells a couple of hundred a month, I would never have ever imagined it, you can make fifty tunes and then you'll get one that does that."

The truth is when the average man on the street thinks of Ram they immediately think of Andy. Does it piss you off that you don't get recognition for tunes that you've made? "Absolutely but I'm sure it happens to a whole bunch of people, like when Skinny makes tunes with Friction or ST Files makes tunes with Marcus. That's what happens when you work with a partner who is a big name," he says without a hint of bitterness.

A quick check on the time shows it's mid-afternoon. Have you been up to much today? "Fuckin hell not a lot man, It's early time for me, I was up pretty late in the studio last night man. I'm actually working on a remix for Hype at the moment, an old Ganja tune called "You Must Think First." I called him up about getting a guestlist for Fabric one night and I think he liked the 'Tudor Rose remix' I'd done and he wanted something rough and heavy like that." Working samples from film is familiar territory for Shimon, from his early pillaging of 'Predator' to the 'YMTF' drum and bass producers have consistently used cinema as a rich sampling ground. I take a lot of inspiration from movies," he admits, "anything by Tarrantino, he's a rude boy!" I love both Kill Bill films and I'm a big fan of all the old kung fu and samurai films where the 'YMTF' sample comes from."

Last years 'Tudor Rose remix' was a critical moment for Shimon. There's no doubt that a man who has produced on all-time great tracks like 'Quest', 'Nightflight', 'Bodyrock', 'Hush-Hush' and 'Titan' to name but a few is very gifted but sometimes he's not got the props. Getting to remix the Dillinja is a test that few mortals could pass but boy did Shimon rise to the occasion and its made people stand up and salute his skills.

"I couldn't believe it man when Carl (Hardleaders) asked me to do it," he says exuberantly. "To tangle with anything Dillinja does is an honour, he's a heavyweight guy! As for the tune, "It was pretty fuckin hard in the first place! So I just gave it my take on it." A pure statement of intent from Shimon this tune took the original added disgusting chainsaw bassline and somehow managed to out-filth the mighty 'Ja in a bloody dancefloor massacre.

The knock-on effect has been that a lot more people have seen Shimon in a new light and he's been inundated with offers of further work. "I've had remix offers but I don't really take 'em as standard, I like a challenge or if it has a bit of profile to it, some thing's I turn down." One opportunity he's grabbed with both hands was to remix Zinc's Kinda Funky. "I play it all the time, it was kool to do that remix 'cos it was originally a breakbeat 2 step thing."

Working in tandem with his producer profile is Shimon the mean DJ. He says it's a 'privilege' to spin all over the world tipping Puerto Rico, Perth Australia and The End "cos its like home" as three exceptional stop offs on the drum and bass map. Not that he travels lightly! "I always think that you've got to have a bunch of dubs." No Final Scratch? "Nah, nah, I've got a really heavy bag man! I think more or less anyone can download a few tunes and that but it takes more effort to get a nice bag of dubs together." He's also seamlessly blended the new Ram Raiders mix CD, including all the dancefloor bombs from the chapters 4, 5 & 6 with his personal favorites from the Ram back catalogue. Like all good DJs he's a perfectionist at heart. "You got to get the mix right. You can't be selling a mistake man."

Shimon approached the ATM cover CD with the same precision. Is he happy with the result? "I like it; it took me fuckin, a little while man. If mix CDs are good people listen to them a lot and generally if there's a mistake that's what people remember, I've done it the best I could." Is it a typical Shimon club mix? "To a certain extent, it's a different thing because you've got to ask people for favours. Every tune on there I like, It's a snapshot, it's got a bit of everything its quite hard in places, its got rollers, and it,s quite mellow in places. Thanks to everyone who let me use tunes," he continues, "there's Dillinja, Fresh, Zinc, Pendulum, a whole heap of people."

Finally when talk of the future comes into play, Shimon has his sights set on further success. "I'm growing up or starting too! I've done a bunch of tunes recently but I don't know what they're culminating into yet, I'm going to circle them out and see what response they get." The prospect of a solo LP is some way off. "I'd love to do an album but I'm under no illusions that it would have to be great." He's definitely going to give it his best shot though. "In the past I haven't been as serious as I could have been, I've always been up for partying. This is probably the only thing that I'll do that I'll enjoy doing. I'm making a dash for it this year," he laughs.

ATM ISSUE 60 CD TRACKLISTING

01. Sub Focus
Get On Up - Frequency Records
"This guy is hot stuff. Definitely one to watch out for. 'Get On Up' is right up my street, rolling party vibes and it's got a bit of funk in there."

02. Karl Kennedy & Kaos
Up All Night - Circle Recordings
"Really nice rolling party thing. Circle's going to be a label to look out for. Owned by Kevin Gimble, manger of Circle DJ agency in America."

03. Ed Rush & Optical
Compound (Gridlock rmx) - Virus recs
"Loved the original. Gridlock has totally done this tune justice. Wicked!"

04. Skynet
Stingray - Unknown
"Nice production. Definitely in the box. Like this tune a lot. A bit techy but not too much."

05. Fresh
Floodlight - DOA Records
"Doesn't need any introduction. Tune of the moment. 10 out of 10 for originality."

06. Pendulum
Tonite remix - Function Records
"I wanted to get Pendulum on there. Their sound and production is really good."

07. Eddie Woo
Keep It Warm - Frequency
"I play this more towards the roll out mellow end of a set."

08. Jo (Friction & Frenzic remix)
R-Type - Shogun Audio
"I was one of the lucky ones to get a copy of the original; it's a bit worn out now! The original was religion and I'm definitely feeling the remix."

09. Shimon & Sonic
Way Back - Dub
"Sonic's a really cool guy. We were both playing out in Australia and we had our laptops and we finished two tracks out there. I really like this it's reminiscent of 'Bacteria'. Big up Sonic!"

10. MC Tali
Blazin - Full Cycle
"I was going to use the remix but I thought nah, i'll play the original. I just love Tali's vocals man!"

11. Ram Trilogy - Chase Scene
RAM Records
"This tune means quite a lot to me. It's quite old but you can still play it now. It brings back good memories."

12. DJ Zinc
Kinda Funky (Shimon remix) - Bingo
"I play this all the time. It was kool to do that remix cos it was a breakbeat / 2 step thing to begin with. It turned out pretty kool."

13. Dillinja
Foxy Lady - Chronic
"I Really like the stabby intro and rolling b-line. Classic."

14. Roni Size
Strictly Social (Nu Tone rmx) - Liquid V
"When the set gets mellower I really like to draw for this one."

15. Sonic
Galaxy Ride - Space Recordings
"This tune brings up the end of the CD. Real oldskool feel, a nice way to end the mix."

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WORKIN CLASS HEROES

Welcome to the this months installment of **WORKIN CLASS HEROES**, We finally did it, after many months of negotiating and late night phone calls, We managed to lock **ASTEK** down, and like me, I'm sure you'll enjoy the result.

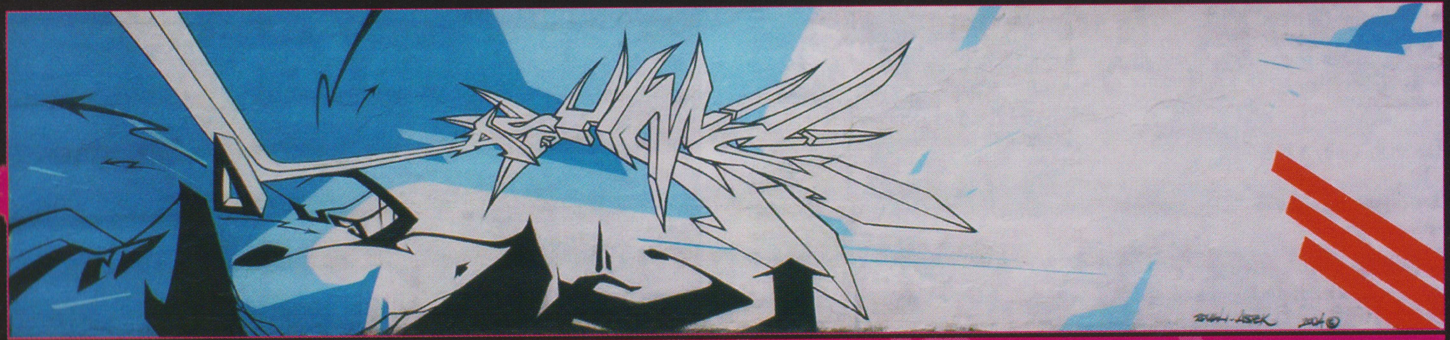
ASTEK became involved in the graffiti scene during the late 80's; being talented in art he was drawn to the speed and skill of the spray can and the sheer style of the letters and characters. He began to write **ASTEK** at the age of twelve and was well known around South London as a bus-bomber, but yearned to paint pieces. He painted a few but found it hard to come by paint, although many of you will still remember him for his work in the late 80s. **ASTEK** really started to make a name for himself in 1995 with the help of the re-birth of The Woolwich Dockyard hall of fame. By 1998 he was known as one of London's finest, working and painting alongside the artists who first inspired him. In 2000 **ASTEK** was voted London's best wall painter on graffiti site location 12. The styles he paints are so diverse and have been perfected over years, He paints wildstyle, 2D, 3D and also characters plus taken part in large graffiti jams up and down this country and in Ireland and Belgium. More recently **ASTEK** has transformed his work on to canvas and taken part in several exhibitions in London and Manchester: mainly with the '***they made me do it collective***'. Currently **ASTEK** is working on his own graffiti event **JAM EM IN'** which started last year; it was a great day involving 28 writers painting a large wall in East London. Alongside that he is working on large scale murals in and around London with Signal project. *For me now I want to move on to being a respected as a artist and carry on pushing the productions and the British graffiti scene.*

ASTEK has finally decided to put together his own website ***www.astekz.com***. So for the first time you can view the works and styles of London's most recognised graffiti artist aswell as purchase Prints and Canvasses, so make sure you check. Meanwhile sit back and enjoy the London styles of **ASTEK**.

Anyone who wants to contribute, send your photo's to **LEE FRAMER**, Po Box 5307, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 1TW or mail me at **leeframer@hotmail.com** Peace. We **GHOST**.

ASTEK DIGITAL DESIGN 2004

KEEN · ASTEK · JAPH PLAISTOW EAST LONDON 2003



ROUGH · ASTEK SUTTON SOUTH LONDON 2004

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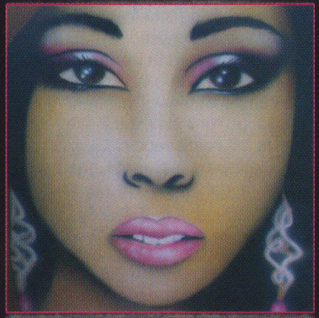
ASTEK [THE ALIEN] LONDON 2003



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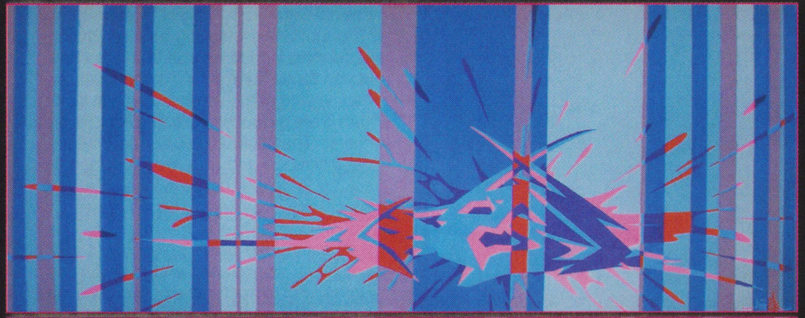

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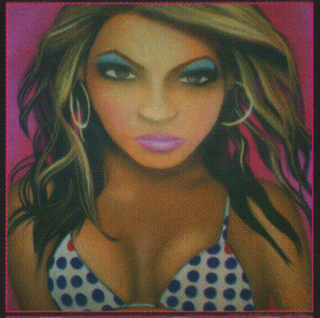
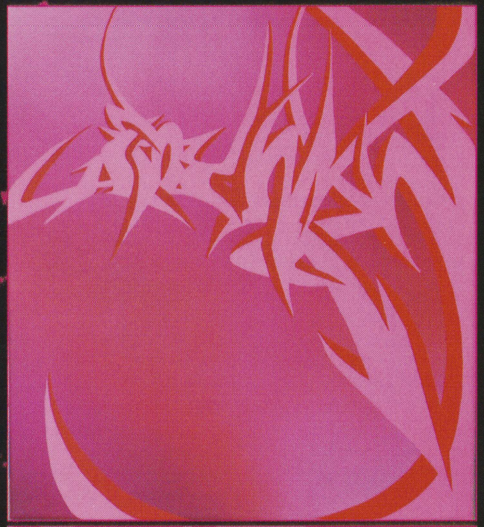


BEYONCÉ CANVAS

ASTEK CANVAS 2004

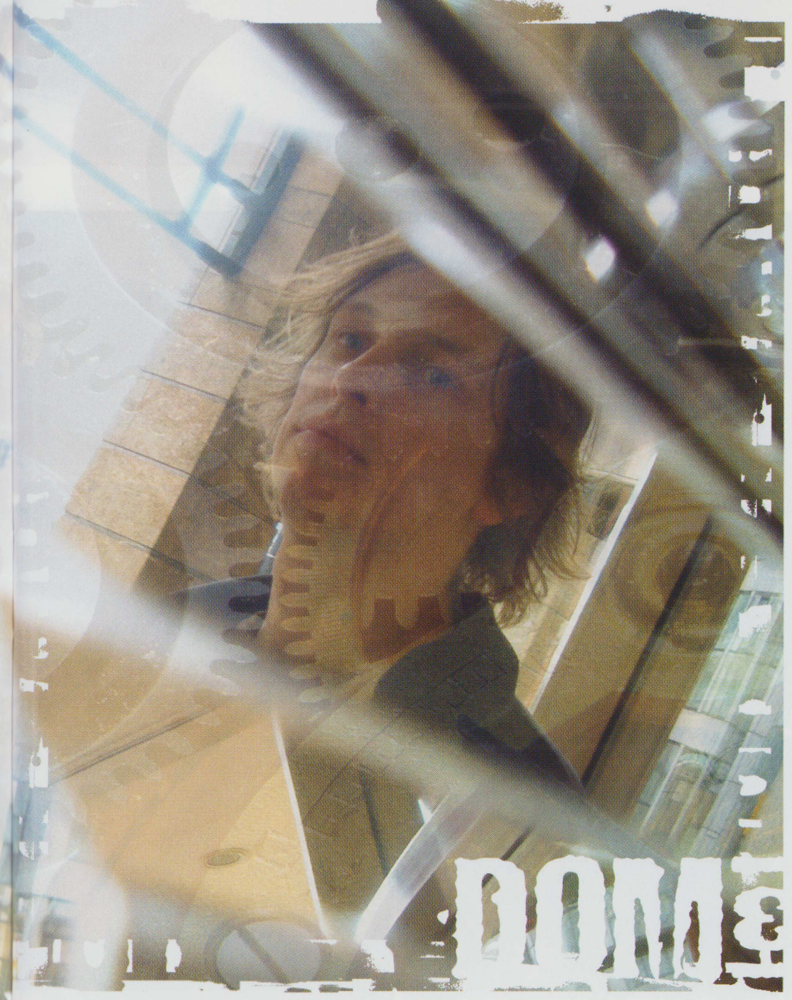
ASTEK CANVAS 2004



ASTEK CANVAS 2004

DOM & ROLAND

· words: JHO Oakley



Dom & Roland is both a production pioneer and legend in drum&bass and June will see the release of his most satisfying album to date; 'Chronology'. This is Dom & Roland's third artist album, following on from the critically acclaimed 'Industry' and 'Back for the Future' LPs, 'Chronology' marks 10 years of Dom & Roland's artistic wizardry in drum&bass so ATM caught up with the renowned 'duo' in Dom's studio to hear his story and to find out all about 'Chronology'.

Where better to start than with the fact that Dom's formative years were spent touring the world with his parents; and before you start guessing they weren't rock stars they were actually both opera singers. Dom confesses, 'Yeah… when I was a kid I used to get dragged around wherever they were performing, so I suppose I had quite a musical background.' As you might expect, living within that kind of environment, it wasn't long before an instrument was put in front of him, in Dom's case the piano. 'To begin with I absolutely hated it, I was like most kids I guess, when your parents want you to do something you don't want to do it.' However, like most mother's, Dom's Mum had a cunning plan to combat Dom's lack of enthusiasm, 'She promised me; if and when I got to Grade five I could give up, knowing full well that once I'd reached that stage I'd be more into it as I'd be able to play some pretty cool stuff.' The arrangement did exactly what it was supposed to do, and Dom reached grade seven before his attention was well and truly grabbed by the emergence of dance music and its eye-catching culture.

Dom's initiation to the scene came in the form of a variety of house parties. 'Back then like most kids my age in London, every week I'd just go to the coolest party I'd heard of and listen to the latest dance music available.' Dom explains this was before the word jungle, let alone the words drum & bass had even been mentioned. 'I think it was just called Techno back then, Techno just stood for any kind of dance music.' It wasn't long before the scene did experience a split, individuals were given the choice of house or hardcore, and Dom chose hardcore. 'I was always into the beats and the rhythms so I went down the hardcore route.' It wasn't long before Dom, like many a dance music fan before him, scraped together every penny and pound he could find and bought himself a set of decks. 'I got a shit pair of belt driven Sound Lab decks, and started buying a tonne of vinyl, and then started putting together loads of mixtapes.'

It wasn't long before Dom was well and truly engrossed in the music, but it was thanks to his noisy neighbours next door, that he actually found the start of his road to stardom. 'This next door neighbour of mine kept having these wild parties, and he'd managed to hear me playing my hardcore sets through the walls, and one day he asked me to come and play at one of his parties.' Obviously, Dom took up the older cooler guys offer and it was at this very party that he met none other than renowned Nico of the soon to be legendary No U Turn Records. Fate? 'As it happens, Nico had just started making tunes in his loft, with an Atari and an Akai S1000 sampler, and that night he sat a few of us down in a room at the end of the night and said, 'I made this today.'" This totally threw Dom, as he recalls, "I just remember saying over and over again in my head, this guy made this tune. That is so cool! The idea of making a tune had never even occurred to me." You have to remember that until around that time, music of this nature could only really be made in big, expensive studios. 'Back in those days it was big studios that made records, not people in bedrooms, the technology had literally just become available and I didn't know anything about it.' Within moments of hearing Nico's tunes, Dom was hassling him about how he could learn the ways of the bedroom producer. Nico's offer of tuition was, 'basically, he said give me a £100 each time you come in and make a tune, and I'll make sure it gets put on a record. So that's what I did.' This was all music to Dom's ears, and Dom handed over his first £100 the very same week.

Other frequent visitors to the loft studio were the now equally well known names of Ed Rush and Trace and it wasn't long before Nico's loft crew started churning out some really big tunes that all the top-flight DJs were playing. As a result, Nico decided to start his very own imprint, No U Turn. However, due to the uniqueness of his own productions it was a while before Dom had his first solo release. 'The stuff I was making sounded much deeper than anything else that was coming on No U Turn. I think it was because the majority of the artists involved in No U Turn were producers as opposed to engineers.' Thankfully Nico was really feeling the difference and as a result decided to set up a totally different label, Saigon, specifically to release Dom's tunes. It wasn't long before all the big name DJs were caning the label's releases, but after just a few singles, and an EP on Saigon Dom found himself with a new production partner, Brian from Skeleton records, sitting at a table with Moving Shadow playing their beats and talking business.

'At the time it was without a doubt the label to be on, they released all the biggest tunes… I also really admired their production, it sounded so much more professional than anything else that was about at that time.' Within weeks, under the name Current Affairs, they were offered and quickly accepted a three single record contract with Moving Shadow. However, Current Affairs didn't last long. 'Basically, the timing was really bad for Brian as he was going through some general life problems at that time, so much so that he decided that he didn't want to produce drum & bass anymore. So, I decided my only chance of keeping a deal with Shadow was to play them some of my solo stuff.' Dom sat down with Rob Playford, and played him about fifteen of his own individual compositions, and to Dom's shear delight, 'Rob immediately offered me a solo deal, but this time is was for a lot more than just three singles, he wanted six singles and three albums. The rest as they say is history…'

When talking about Dom's history with Moving Shadow you have to summarise, because his discography really does make Lord of the Rings look like a short story. So here it is… Dom has had numerous top selling singles and EPs including tracks like 'Thunder' the mighty 'Can't Punish Me', 'Imagination' and 'Dynamo' to name a few. All of which have proven to be timeless as they continue to be purchased in abundance today. His much warranted top producer profile has also provoked plenty of remix work from a variety of different genres, from electro grandmasters like 'Art of Noise' to the nastier end of German punk rock! However his most memorable remixes to date would have to be his mighty remix of the massive 'Terrorist' and his excellent reworking of 'Bomb Scare': the very track that that reeled him into the world of dance music and its culture. Last but not least his albums; 'Industry' and 'Back for the Future' not to mention the latest and his most prized masterpiece to date 'Chronology'.

'Industry' really was an artist album for a genre to be proud of, neither before nor since has a drum & bass artist album received so much positive press and exposure from both the underground and the mainstream. But Dom explains it was different back then, 'the music industry has changed so much since I wrote 'Industry'… back then it felt like it was just all about being original and creative, to be totally honest due to the lack of technology it was even simpler than that, it felt like all you really had to do to sell a record was create new sounds, sounds that people hadn't heard before, and that was something I really enjoyed doing.' Where as nowadays Dom believes the required standard is so much higher than before. 'Aside from new sounds, nowadays a record needs to be so neatly structured, and from what I see and hear in today's industry you need catchy riffs too.' Dom's follow up to 'Industry' on Moving Shadow was 'Back for the Future' however Dom admits, that album really didn't do him justice. 'When the time came for me to write a second album, I really wasn't happy with my sound and I didn't feel I had enough ideas that I could pull together to make an album.' Even so, labels have needs, and so in order to get back some of the money that the label had invested in him the job had to be done. 'They ended up putting out stuff that I'd already released as singles with a couple of new tracks. I also licensed some of my favourite tracks and remixes that I'd done for other labels. If the truth be known it ended up as more of a compilation, it was never a concept artist album.'

Dom explains that ever since he has yearned to produce something more like 'Industry' which as opposed to 'Back for the Future' was a concept album that to this day he remains to be proud of. With a sigh of relief, Dom says, 'with 'Chronology' I really feel that I've finally done that. In fact I can honestly say that out of all the albums that I've done I'm definitely happiest with this one.' It's important to note that with 'Chronology' Dom has taken his fascination with sound to new heights. 'I've read a lot of books over the last couple of years, mainly about sound and how it affects different people.' Dom continues, 'I learnt that when you're younger your ears tend to like brighter sounds, and higher frequencies.' The most important ingredient though Dom argues is still the mix down. 'There's a science behind making your mix downs appeal to everyone, if you don't follow this procedure correctly your mix might sound really good on one system but not on another, with this album I've purposefully made it so that it even sounds really good on the office stereo.' Which the majority of journalists probably use for their music reviews: Clever thinking Dom.

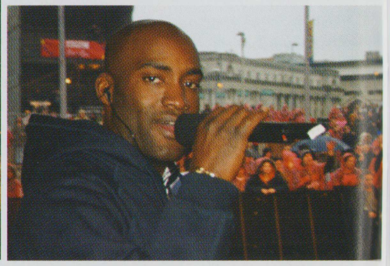
Even though Dom is at the forefront of future music, which is confirmed by the shear number of copies he has of that particular publication cluttering up his studio, to make 'Chronology' Dom decided to go back and use some of the best of the old-skool to compliment his widespread usage of the latest music production software on offer. 'One of the main things that people really look out for and love in drum&bass are the breaks, and all the good breaks that people have used and continue to use, like the Amen, were all made on 60's and 70's equipment, and the only way to really make that sound even with today's advancements is to go back and use 60's and 70's equipment.' Which is why Dom went and bought a vintage 1960's desk to mix this album down on, and that's why it sounds noticeably different to a lot of the strictly computer generated stuff that you hear on dance floors at the moment.

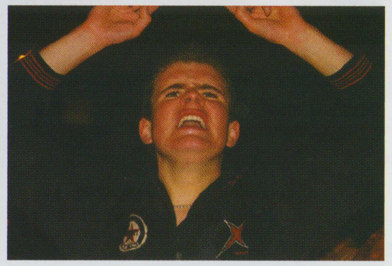
To conclude, Dom feels that in recent years he has finally reached a level of expertise which means that he can truly get his sound down on vinyl, and we're not talking clichés here. 'Chronology really is the closest I've come to recreating the sounds that I hear in my head, and as a producer that feels great.' On this positive vibe, and due to the small fact that Dom's record contract with Moving Shadow has run its course, Dom has decided that now is the time to start up his own imprint, well two actually. 'Yeah, I'm gonna start up two of my own labels later this year, Dom&Roland Productions is going to be strictly for my own productions and collaborations, where as the other label which is still to be titled is going to be for artists with a similar sound and mission to my own.' Before that, 'I'm off on a much deserved post chronology holiday next week and then as soon as I'm back I'm going to be in the studio working on a remix of Hive's 'Neo' which I'm really excited about.' Look out for that one…

Dom&Roland's 'Chronology' features; two tearing collaborations done with help from Skynet and Kemal, three remixes of epic proportions from Hive, Calyx and the Diesel, Karl K, Kaos Crew, as well as a whole new batch of Dom&Roland's most inspired work to date. Due for release in all good record shops late in June; ATM feels this long player is an artist album for a genre to proud of.

1xtra and 6music live in ireland

words: **Jo Sharff**





The Irish are regarded by many as being some of the most up for it crowds in the world. In fact, some would say they are absolute nutters. Well, after it started pissing it down, this certainly did not deter the 2000 or so crazy revellers that staggered through the barriers at the floating stage in Laganside, Belfast. The event? A top notch drum and bass and hip-hop concert, supported by 1Xtra and 6 Music as part of Music Live. In fact, it was a sick line-up: 1Xtra's own respected Bailey and Rodney P and Skitz. Plus, the phenomenal star that is Ty, Full Cycle's main blood, Mr Roni Size, his own protégé, Tali and Belfast's own drum 'n' bass genius; Calibre. You couldn't really ask for a better line-up, however, I could say differently about the weather! What is it about sod's law? Fucking typical! 1Xtra kindly dished out some rather attractive rain macs and the event turned into a sea of red –it looked like a wave of leprechauns on heat.

Calibre was on first, which was a bit disappointing – the crowds were slow in their entrance at the beginning and there was little atmosphere for him – however, for those of us that got to go to his after party – it was all good baby! Him, Klute and SP oh yeah… Calibre is without doubt the most prolific producer right now and the scene is all the more inspiring and exciting because of him. Up next was Tali and her backing singers, performing songs from her debut album "Lyric on my Lip". Along with the killer title track she also played a selection of others including the stunning next single "Airport Lounge". The ever popular Rodney P and Skitz kept the turntables rolling while the rain kept flowing. Next on stage was Ty who many were most looking forward to. Both unique and talented, Ty fuses hip-hop, soul and jazz and is as charismatic on and off stage. The real beats started after that with the drum 'n' bass fraternity exercising their own distinctive styles. Bailey began his set on top form and Laganside was now awash (!) with an electrifying vibe. As usual he didn't disappoint, bringing with him a storm of breaks and basslines, working the crowd like magic. Up last and eagerly anticipated was Mr Full Cycle himself; Roni Size along with Dynamite and Tali providing vocal talent. He coaxed the drenched ravers with some heavy rollers in true full cycle form. Dynamite and Tali mesh really well together. They were bouncing around on stage, buzzing off each other. They sang some classics together from both New Forms and In the Mode and Tali re-ignited the Breakbeat Era days - not as deep and menacing as the eccentric Lenie Laws though.

So all in all it was a damn fine event and with such prominent artists I felt I had to catch up with them all and quiz them on some more unusual topics. Here's what they all had to say.

BAILEY Q&A

Top 5-desert island discs? "Oh my gosh, well I was brought up on Motown flavas, so I would have to take a Stevie Wonder album and a Marvin Gaye. Give me some 4 Hero as well actually. Give me a Marley Marl, a hip-hop producer from back in the day and I'd have to have some dnb too – Goldie's Timeless".

3 top clubs that you've played in the world? "Number one without a doubt easily is Scientific at The Ministry in Christchurch in New Zealand – it was incredible, I've never seen anything like it in my life. Number two is Metalheadz because I can play whatever the hell I want and its all good. Number three is Technicality at Herbal. Those are the places I feel really comfortable. I can go and people are listening to what is going on in the tunes, rather than looking for big drops. They really are tuned in".

Most random place you've ever played? "I went to Australia about 4 years ago and there was an after party and I played in a sandbank underneath a motorway flyover, that was quite strange, you had to walk through some bushes to get there!"

First record you ever bought? "Malcolm Mclaren – the Duck Rock album."

What would you do if you weren't in music? "I was studying to be an electrician or electrical engineer but it didn't work out. I was a bit pissed off because I went to college for years and at the end of it I had the qualifications but no experience and people wouldn't take me on. Luckily at the time I was into music so that all took off but I've always been into the technical side of things so I think an electrician."

What is your biggest vice? "Silence, pure unadulterated silence. Just let me sit in my chair, looking at the floor, doing nothing. I'm on the go so much these days so it's nice sometimes not to hear anything"

If you were Prime Minister what's the first thing you would do? "Get rid of money"

If you could have written any film soundtrack what would it be? "Blade Runner"

Who would you most like to work with dead or alive? "Stevie Wonder"

In one sentence what is 1Xtra to you? "A hole that needed to be filled".

MC TALI Q&A

Top 5-desert island discs? "Oh shit! I would say Roni Size Reprazent New Forms, Goldie's Timeless, Soul II Soul Club Classics, Kanye West College Dropout and number 5 Kelis Tasty"

Most random place you've ever played? "On an outdoor basketball court in the pouring rain in Macedonia with Roni"

If you were to have sex to a dnb tune what would it be? "Anyone who knows me will understand why I say this, Soundboy by Clipz"

What is your can't live without piece of musical equipment? "My weighted keyboards, because if I didn't have that I'd have nothing to write to"

What would you do if you weren't in music? "I can't imagine not being in music, probably teaching in a performing arts school because I'm a trained teacher and I have a diploma in performing arts – I love the arts or doing something with animals, I love animals"

What is your biggest vice? "My boyfriend and my bed!"

Have you ever been arrested? "No, I've been cautioned – but I'm not saying what for! It was really naughty and something I'm not proud of!"

What's a top night out with Tali? "Top night out with me would be starting out with some good food, some good wine, probably round my house with some friends, preferably the food being made by my best friend Missy, have some wine and then roll down to the Level in Bristol with the whole Full Cycle crew, mashing it up, alongside Shy FX, DJ Zinc and Brian Gee. Then with an after party back at Roni's"

If you could have written any film soundtrack what would it be? "The soundtrack to The Piano"

Who would you most like to play a game of twister with? "Orlando Bloom,Pharell or Kelis, she's sexy!"

Who would you most like to work with dead or alive? "Missy Elliot"

In one sentence what is 1Xtra to you? "Supporting the sound in a way that other radio stations aren't, especially my sound and I think it is killing everyone else".

RODNEY P AND SKITZ Q&A

Top 5-desert island discs? RP – "Not what you'd expect to be honest. I'd have Anita Baker greatest hits album, Stevie Wonder greatest hits album. Maybe a few that don't exist – its my island, its my way! I want an East coast American album of hip-hop between 1984 and 1996 – so I want KRS-One, I want Rakim, I want Kool G Rap, Tribe called Quest. I have to cover the board, I have a diverse listening taste. I need a Minnie Riperton as well. I need some hip-hop but its hard, I can't pick just one! I need an 80's dancehall tape from Saxon Soundsystem in London.". Sk. – "Off the top of my head, Maceo Parker, The Soul of A Black Man, Bob Marley, Natural Mystic, Jimi Hendrix, Little Wing, Public Enemy, Fight the Power and Boogie Down Productions, Criminal Minded"

3 top clubs that you've played in the world? RP – "One of the best clubs I ever played was Dingwalls, back in the mid-eighties with all the London Posse. I'm not a super club person, I like the smaller clubs. They all kind of merge in one! A stadium in Zimbabwe, that was amazing. Number three would be the night Skitz and I do in Chamonix – we regularly go and get extremely drunk!". Sk. – "In the mountains in Chamonix at the Nine Bar Club, my launch party last week at Subterranea and Glastonbury last year"

Most random place you've ever played? Sk. – "A bar in the middle of a field in the middle of Exmoor"

First record you ever bought? RP – "I know this one! It was called "Work That Sucker To Death" but I can't remember the name of the group" (It is Xavier). Sk. – "Abba - Arrival"

What is your can't live without piece of musical equipment? RP – "My itunes". Sk. – "My sampler"

What would you do if you weren't in music? RP – "I've been doing music since before I left school! I ain't never looked back. I don't know but whatever it would be I'd be good at it!". Sk. – "I would be hustling and trying to get into music"

If you were Prime Minister what's the first thing you would do? RP – "I'd buy everyone a drink and tell them to chill out!". Sk. – "Abolish religion"

If you could have written any film soundtrack what would it be? RP – "The Godfather, it's a classic. Or Star Wars.". Sk. – "Apocalypse Now"

Who would you most like to play a game of twister with? RP – "Any young lady that works for the Dark Angel Company". Sk. – "Halle Berry"

Who would you most like to work with dead or alive? RP – "Bob Marley". Sk. – "Jimi Hendrix"

In one sentence what is 1Xtra to you? RP – "The future.". Sk. – "Lowdown dirty grimey tasty basslines".

TY Q&A

Top 5-desert island discs? "Joni Mitchell's greatest hits, Marvin Gaye's greatest hits, Kate Bush greatest hits, De La Soul's greatest hits and my album Upwards."

3 top clubs that you've played in the world? "Dinamo Devash in Israel, A club in Bern rocked and Fabric, it's a wicked venue"

Most random place you've ever played? "A basketball match in Crystal Palace – it was a disaster!"

If you were to have sex to a hip-hop tune what would it be? "Something naughty – Jump Around – it's dictated by speed"

First record you ever bought? "It takes a Nation of Millions by Public Enemy"

What is your can't live without piece of musical equipment? "MPC 3000"

What would you do if you weren't in music? "Something to do with watching and analysing things. A job that would enable me to analyse the environment and report on"

What is your biggest vice? "Porn"

If you were Prime Minister what's the first thing you would do? "Erase George Bush's number from my phone"

If you could have written any film soundtrack what would it be? "Superfly"

Who would you most like to play a game of twister with? "Lisa Nicole Carson from Ally Mcbeal"

Who would you most like to work with dead or alive? "Marvin Gaye"

In one sentence what is 1Xtra to you? "Possibilities".

RONI SIZE Q&A

Top 5-desert island discs? "Bob James, Glen Washington, Mighty Diamonds, Loose Ends and Patrice Rushen, any of them could be my partner on a desert island"

3 top clubs that you've played in the world? "Brazil – the Skol Beats festival in Sao Paulo, Serbia the Exit festival and Bristol 'cause there's no party like a Bristol party"

Most random place you've ever played? "Some Oxford University ball with everyone dancing in tuxedos"

First record you ever bought? "These are the Breaks by Curtis Blow"

What is your can't live without piece of musical equipment? "My S760 Roland"

What is your biggest vice? "Working"

If you could have written any film soundtrack what would it be? "A film called Babylon which was about sound systems back in the day"

Who would you most like to play a game of twister with? "Halle Berry"

Who would you most like to work with dead or alive? "Aswad"

In one sentence what is 1Xtra to you? "A breath of fresh air, it's a lease of life because there hasn't been anything like this before. I make music for 1Xtra. When I'm in the studio I'm thinking Skitz, I'm thinking Rodney, I'm thinking Ras Kwame –they are all so open-minded and would all play my music".

CALIBRE Q&A

Top 5-desert island discs? "Brain Eno - Miles Davis - Kind of Blue, Scientist - Curse of the Vampires, Jonny Harris - Movements and Minnie Riperton with Come to my Garden"

3 top clubs that you've played in the world? "Dublin down at Switch, Flex in Vienna and Budapest, no actually Locus in Bristol"

Most random place you've ever played? "Jersey"

If you were to have sex to a dnb tune what would it be? "Red Forever by A-Sides, a tune he did on Metalheadz

First record you ever bought? "UB40 – the first album"

What is your can't live without piece of musical equipment? "My brain"

What is your biggest vice? "Weed"

What's a top night out with Calibre? "Some brandy and coke in Helsinki and a lot of loving!"

If you were Prime Minister what's the first thing you would do? "That's a tall order! Start designing military technology that shot food instead of guns!"

If you could have written any film soundtrack what would it be? "BabyCart at the River Styx"

Who would you most like to play a game of twister with? "I really don't know, definitely a woman though, I wouldn't play twister with a man. Kylie Minogue"

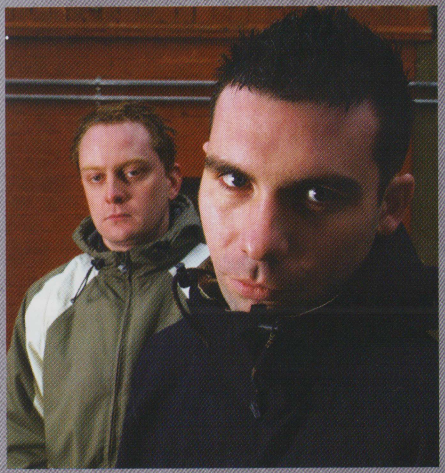
Who would you most like to work with dead or alive? "Eric Sontag"

In one sentence what is 1Xtra to you? "Good music"

Compiled by Ben Holdtight

For those of you who don't know, this is the part of ATM that's strictly dedicated to those artists who are coming through fast on the back of some serious beats. Part of D&B is moving forward and constantly pushing the boundaries; and the new wave of producers we've covered in Leaders of The New School are at the forefront. This issue we have a seriously strong section covering Ram's new prodigé Sub Focus who is bound to be massive with such a fat sound; Logistics who is already making a name for himself with Hospital. We have Amit who has burst on to the scene with some heavy, heavy tunes; old school soldier Majistrate with his new production partner Nicol who together are firing on all cylinders. Then from Stateside we have Evol Intent and Basic Operations, both of which are coming through fast at opposite ends of the D&B spectrum. There's also the dubwise NJC and Emcee stalwarts Cybin. Recognise..

CYBIN



Names: Cybin aka Matt & Ben
Ages: 27 / 29
Based: Just outside Bristol

Biggest tunes so far? 'Roller', which was Emcee 001 and 'Bad Dreams' on Lockdown.

How long have you been making tunes for? Drum & Bass, about 7 years now

How did u get into music? Matt: I got into music early on in life cause my dads a huge jazz and soul fan, he changed my nappies to the sound of Miles Davis! Ben: Always played instruments, guitar, bass etc, got into mixing records and it evolved from there.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing and Production, which would it be and why? Matt: I love production, you can really loose yourself in a beat when it's rollin in Logic at the studio. When your out mixing you have to be as together as you can to mix fast and on time, for the sake of the ravers! Ben: If I had to choose then it would be production, I love playin out but it's all about seeing people getting down to your tunes!

What kind of music inspire or influence you? Anything with soul and a groove!

What track would you most like to have written? Matt: Any track by Herbie Hancock. Ben: In dnb maybe 'Tear' by Skeptic on Eastside 'cos it's been in the box for so long and it was one of the tunes inspired the whole Lockdown sound.

Who's your favorite DJ and why? Andy C, cause you know your gonna hear like 30+ tunes in the hour slot!!!!!, and Bailey for his selection.

Where would you most like to play and why? Dance Tent at Glastonbury festival 'cos it's huge!! and it's right on our doorstep.

Favorite studio equipment? Matt: Fat pc, (home build of course!) Ben: Dynaudio Monitors.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? Matt: Brick up the windows and lock the door! lol. Ben: You cant polish turd ! lol

EVOL INTENT

Names: Nick Weiller, Ashley Jones
Alias: Nick: Knick (of Evol Intent). Ashley: The Enemy, few others for other genres.
Ages: Nick: 25. Ashley: 23.
Based: Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

Biggest tunes so far? Nick: I'd say it's a toss up between our remix of Future Cut's "Ghetto Style" and "7 angels with 7 plagues" (Barcode). Ashley: Evol intent tunes? I think the Barcode release was fairly popular. Pish Posh "Corrupt Cops (Evol Intent rmx)", also the one's Nick mentioned. DJ Hidden + Slacknote "Where's the Score (Evol Intent rmx)" was our first pretty big tune that helped open doors for us.

How long have you been making tunes for? Nick: I've been producing D&B for about 5 years now, although I've been making music for much longer. Ashley: I've been producing drum n' bass for about 6 years. I have definitely learned more and matured a lot in the past 2 years with production. Still many more years of learning I'm sure. It's a never ending journey.

How did u get into music? Nick: I got into music at a very early age. My sister was into punk rock when I was in 4th grade, so she rubbed off on me. I was spray painting Dead Kennedy's logos on my friends basement walls before I was in middle school. Ashley: I was into the experimental and IDM sound, then went out to a rave and discovered the jungle room. It had a lot of the same chopped up breaks and deep bass, so that was most attractive to me; I loved the dark aggressive style of it also.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing and Production, which would it be and why? Nick: I'd choose production. I enjoy dj'ing and playing out to people and watching their reactions, but at the same time, I just feel like I could make music for the rest of my life, and I probably will. In the same token, I can't picture myself being 40 years old and playing tunes at a club. Ashley: Impossible to choose. I love making tunes, but I also love DJ'ing and actually getting to see the tunes in action. It's an awesome feeling to see a crowd going wild to a tune you just finished up.

What kind of music inspire or influence you? Nick: I'm a big fan of hard and aggressive music, and that has a played a big role in how I tend to approach drum & bass. Although, I have to admit that I've been taking in a lot of softer music lately like Radiohead, Interpol and artists in that category. Ashley: Honestly, pretty much anything. Punk, hardcore, idm, classical, jazz, rap, industrial, could go on forever. Most influential would definitely be hardcore/punk and IDM.

What track would you most like to have written? Nick: That's a tough call. I suppose I wish I had something to do with "Heavy Metal" by Tech Itch. That's such a sick and demented tune. Ashley: Hard one to pick, but I've always loved Tech Itch "Reborn", Usual Suspects "Doorway", or some of the old Panacea or No U-Turn stuff, so any of that, I would've been proud to have made. Those artists have been a big influence to me as a producer.

Who's your favourite DJ and why? Nick: I have a few really. Andy C is amazing. Even if I'm not into his tune selection, I always find myself shaking my ass a little. He's got an amazing ability to mix, blend and flow in and out of styles. Ashley: Based on DJing skills, I'd say Marky or Andy C. They are both such good DJs and really into it the whole time, definite crowd rockers. I've always been a fan of Dieselboy also, tight precision mixing and a solid track selection.

Where would you most like to play and why? I'd like to play at Renegade Hardware at The End in London. I've only seen pictures, so I don't know how the vibe is, but I'd imagine it's pretty out of control. I'd also like to get a slot at Therapy Sessions one day.

Favourite studio equipment? Nick: I think my favourite piece(s) would have to be my Mackie HR824 monitors. I love the clarity, and overall, they're just amazing monitors. Ashley: The computer.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? Nick: Good question. About 4 or 5 years ago I contacted Gridlok on instant messenger and I asked for some tips. He told me to focus on making each individual sound as fat and as close to perfect as I could, with each individual sound coming off as brilliant by themselves. I think he was also the one who told me to KEEP IT MINIMAL!!! Ashley: The theory and art of mixing down tunes, EQ'ing, compression; and some nice little tips and tricks on getting a clean, loud mix.

What's next for you? Nick: I'm in School at the moment and I'm about to get married. Things are good. I'm happy with D&B and I don't plan on stopping any time too soon. We're all talking about starting a clothing line, so we'll see what happens. Ashley: We're working on an EP for Hardware as well as some big releases for our own label, Evol Intent Recordings and doing quite a bit of remix work for various labels. We're also working on some collaborations with Tech Itch, Exile and some other surprising names, so lookout for that.

leaders of the new skool

NICOL & MAJISTRATE

Names: Ian and Nicol
Alias: Majistrate, and have recorded with A-Sides under Fate. DJ Nicol.
Ages: Both still under 30
Based: Both in Kent about 25 miles outside London

Biggest tunes so far? Majistrate: "Step On (Hold it Now)" and "Retry" on Splash and Juice Recordings were probably a couple of my biggest back in about '96 ish. Nicol: 'Pink Shirt Poofter'.

How long have you been making tunes for? Majistrate: I first started making tunes back in '93 and by '94 I was producing my own stuff. My first release was on Splash Recordings in 1994. Nicol: 18 months.

How did u get into music? Majistrate: I was at the age when the dance scene was blowing up, and pirates like Centerforce and Fantasy were on. I got to play at a few local things then managed to get onto Cyndicut, which opened new doors and eventually got me into production. I then moved onto Kool FM for a bit and started getting more DJ bookings, but the production started to take priority as time was limited due to the day job. Nicol: Mainly through pirate radio. I grew up listening to Fantasy FM and Cyndicut FM (when you lived out in the country back then, all you had was 4 channels of TV, and a stereo - the music these stations played was so different to anything else I had ever heard). At 16 I got a set of decks and would spend every Saturday and penny I had at the local record shop, Age 18'ish I got myself a set on London station, Pressure FM. A lot of the friends I made up there have gone on to big things in the DnB or Garage scene. A few years later I got the chance to play on legendary station, Cyndicut.

If you had to choose beetween DJ'ing and Production, which would it be and why? Majistrate: At the moment I am not really too worried if I am DJ'ing or not. I have been DJ'ing since 13 and started on pirates at 16, so the love of DJ'ing has always been there, but producing is more important to me now, and this second revival and a new studio has taken up all my spare time, so doing both seriously with work as well is difficult. I don't want to sit on the fence but, couldn't pick between the two though as I still cut the plates and keep on top of things, and if it weren't for DJ'ing, I wouldn't have got into production. Both seem to complement each other and it's good to play your own bits when you have just finished 'em to get that reaction and see if you need to re-work the track, so to me DJ'ing is an extension of the studio. Nicol: DJ'ing led to me working in the studio, and is something I consider great fun to do, in the bedroom, radio or club, it doesn't matter, I love playing my records - every time I leave the record shop or cutting house with a bag a new tunes I feel like a little kid on xmas day with all my new toys. Production is different, making tunes can be hard work and time consuming, though we do have a good laugh, its not always easy. As soon as you hear or play one of your own tunes in a club, and you see the reaction on the dancefloor, its worth the effort. I'd choose DJ'ing if I had to pick one though I guess.

What kind of music inspire or influence you? Majistrate: Inspiration depends on the mood I think, but everything influences, like if you go out and hear fresh beats and your feeling it, you know you gonna be influenced next time you go back in the studio. Your constantly learning new tricks and ideas from everything you hear. My main influences though are from Hip Hop. Nicol: My main influence has got to be Drum & Bass. It's what I listen to 95% of the time and have been collecting vinyl since the pre-jungle days, so its become a big part of my life. I'm always eager to see what direction the big producers / labels are taking the music, always out on the clubs hoping to hear the latest dub; otherwise its hip hop, I'm a big Dr Dre & Snoop Dogg fan.

What track would you most like to have written? Majistrate: D&B wise it would have to be Roni Size "Trust me". Timeless track which is so simple but so effective. Still smashes it now. If my tracks get played in years to come and still sound fresh in the same way I think that I will have got to where I want to be with production. Nicol: Hard question, but probably "The Nine" by Bad Company. Everyone knows it, it's a real distinctive track, and as a DJ its one of those tunes you love to mix. I could name a 100 different tracks though.

Who's your favorite DJ and why? Majistrate: I personally haven't got a favorite DJ, purely because every DJ is different in there own way. Take Andy C on a Ram night at The End for example, it's his night, and although he is always on form, he steps up 10% on that night as the crowd is there for him. It's the same for Hype at Playaz night at Fabric. There is some good new talent coming through and I think DJ's have been overshadowed in recent years by MC's, but the DJ's seem to be making a come back, and some seem to have stepped up their game. Nicol: In a club, Randall, purely 'cos of his mixing ability and selection. Though I haven't heard him much in the last few years... so probably Andy C. Grooverider's Radio 1 show is a good listen, he's a fun host, and has always got that special tune in his box.

Where would you most like to play and why? Majistrate: Not so much of where I would like to play as there are loads of places, but I would have liked to have played at AWOL at the Paradise Club back in the day. That's where all the fresh beats were dropped and the vibe was second to none. Nicol: Ram or True Playaz. Two of the biggest labels in DnB, at two of the best clubs in London, the city that DnB came from, you cant get a bigger booking than that, and plus I'm always down there anyway so would be nice to get a play.

Favorite studio equipment? Majistrate: It has to be the Virus purely for the control you have, but Logic is also a tool by itself and we are finding we are moving more towards plug-ins as there are thousands of sounds and noises ready to be exploited. There seems to be new plug ins every week and it's like getting a new bit of equipment everytime you get one, so it keeps things fresh. This also means that more and more now we are creating the sounds rather than sampling all the time. Nicol: Logic/Mac/Big Screen. We just changed the studio computer to a Mac with the new Logic... it's bad. Hopefully it will be the best investment we'll ever make, the quality of the output has definitely stepped up and the big screen makes things a lot easier when you've been looking at it for 8 hours.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? Majistrate: Switch to Logic. That's basically it. Before we were using Cubase SX, Reason etc, which were ok, but Logic seems to work for us best.Nicol: Don't smoke so much! Nah seriously, I've learnt a lot from just being in the studio with Majistrate, we've also had Hype come in and spend some time with us, to be sat alongside such luminaries working on beats is sometimes a little surreal, but I've picked up so much from just seeing how they work and operate.

What's next for you? Majistrate: We want to start locking things off more this year and concentrate on a direction as it could be too easy to release loads of tracks on loads of labels, that's not what we want to do. The stuff coming in the next few months is the last of the tracks doing the rounds, but there is a whole load of new bits ready to go. Now we are concentrating on producing for True Playaz and Ganja. There are some remixes in the pipeline including the remix of Hype's "Original Foundation" as well as releases on Frontline and Urban Takeover. Also, we have been doing some bits for the Ram Crew, the first of which is out soon on their Frequency label. Nicol: We have targets we're aiming to achieve, but its all happened so fast, "Pink Shirt Poofter" was the second track we made together, the third Frequency signed and the fourth, Hype signed. We've been asked to do a few remixes, one of which is one of my favourite tracks ever, as well as doing some stuff with Eksman. DJing has taken a back seat to producing in the last 18 months, but I'm hoping to get back to doing a radio show soon. I also run my own label, Direct, we're just about to drop our 7th release, and are looking to get the club nights we had running, in Kent, back on the go.

LOGISTICS

Name: Logistics.
Alias: Nu:logic with my brother Nu:Tone.
Age: 22.
Based: Cambridge.

Biggest tunes so far? 'Replay' on Hospital is probably the biggest so far; having it played by both Fabio and Grooverider was a great buzz.

How long have you been making tunes for? About three years now.

How did you get into music? I've always been into music in general, but fell in love with drum and bass when I was about 14/15.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing and Production, which would it be and why? Production - I've always found the creative aspect of making music far more satisfying.

What kind of music inspire or influence you? Soul and funk are where most of my influences lie; people like Steely Dan and Stevie Wonder had a big influence on me. For inspiration, people like Jazzanova, Swag and Scalpel are all doing some excellent stuff that has really grabbed me recently.

What track would you most like to have written? 'Charade' - Grooverider

Who's your favourite DJ and why? It's a tuff one but it's got to be Fabio - for the upfront tune selection.

Where would you most like to play and why? I would love to go to Tokyo - I think as an experience it would be amazing.

Favourite studio equipment? Well I've only really got one piece and that's my computer.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? To take little breaks when mixing down.

What's next for you? 'Together' on Hospital, 'Love Unlimited' on Liquid V and 'Millionaire' / 'Front to Back' on Innerground.

AMIT

Name: Amit Kamboj
Age: 29
Based: In Slough, I've lived here all my life and it's a great place to live, although a lot of people moan about its media attention (The Office).

Biggest tunes so far? I'm not sure but I think it could be 'Roots' on Commercial Suicide. I was surprised with the response on that one. Big-up Randall for smashing it worldwide, he's a true warrior.

How long have you been making tunes for? I've been making tunes for 8 years, but I've only taken it seriously in the last 3. I've spent a lot of time working in different studios with various artists, experimenting with ideas and trying to come up with a new sound. I then hooked up with Mr Digital and that's when things really turned for me.

How did u get into music? As a child I liked listening to Electro Music, my father had a twin tape deck, I would record a loop of a tune and record it again and again till the loop was 1 minute long, I would then dub other sounds on top of the loop; the quality was poo but it worked. I progressed into making music through my love of computers. I got hold of a package called Master Sound on the Amiga 500. This package enabled me to sequence simple loops and layer samples. By listening to artists like Kraftwerk, Joy Division (New Order), African Bambaata and King Tubby, I really found my musical direction.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing and Production, which would it be and why? I would choose producing, simply because it's the thing I loved first!

What kind of music inspire or influence you? Dub, Punk, Electro, Arabic and classical Indian vocalist's such as Mohamid Rafi. I also like sound tracks by Danny Elfman and Enio Moricone, as I am a big film lover and enjoy writing soundtracks on my brothers (Asham Kamboj) films.

What track would you most like to have written? That's an easy one, 'Planet Rock' by African Bambaata.

Who's your favourite DJ and why? It would have to be Mr Randall; the guy is a genius at blending various styles through a set, Heavy weight! Klute is also one of my favourite's DJ's he also plays across the board.

Where would you most like to play and why? Any party that has a wide spectrum of music and lets you play for an hour and a half.

Favourite studio equipment? It would have to be Logic Audio, amazing sequencer and with the full automation, WOW!

What's the best studio advice you've been given? "Forget about the dance floor, just go and plug your influences and make what you want" Mr Digital

What's next for you? Lots of work with Bill Laswell. I've just finished helping him remix a Herbie Hancock track called 'Perfect Machine', an album with him is also in the pipeline. The Metalheadz release should be out by the end of summer and then there are more 12's on Commercial Suicide, Function, Inneractive and something for Marcus.

NJC

Name: Nathaniel Clarkson
Alias: NJC & Nat Clarxon
Age: 26
Based: Ipswich, East Anglia.

Biggest tunes so far? 'Dholi Runner', 'Gangsters Life', 'Frontline rmx', 'Zipper' and a non-DnB track I produced called 'Feel the Buzz' that had 16 weeks of Radio 1 airplay, this featured YT and had a sample in it from a major Bollywood star which caused us no end of legal problems so we couldn't release it although we've re-worked it for YT's album.

How long have you been making tunes for? Just under 10 years, my first experience with making tunes was on an old 4-track tape machine, proper rags but a good starting point, I was about 17 at the time.

How did u get into music? When I was young, a member of my family wont like me saying this but, I was made to have piano lessons and I suppose this was the first instance where I was aware of music as far as notes and scores are concerned although I didn't pass any grades. I was always into drums and this was where my real interest was, I got my first kit when I was 13, from there I didn't look back.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing or Production, which would it be and why? Production definitely, and why, well because that's where I feel at home, in the studio. I've yet to play out and no doubt I will but it's got to be the studio every time. I love making tracks, whatever they may be, every time I start a new tune or do the preparations for a tune it's a buzz, the first ideas you throw down are sometimes the most important parts of a tune, its good to see the tune develop and end up with a finished product, no matter how long it takes!

What kind of music inspire or influence you? If I'm real about it, everything I hear influences me, I'm always pulling music apart in my head and taking elements with me into the studio. The one thing I've always checked out are the drums or breaks; from day one I clocked the way in which they were placed into a track. As far as artists or groups that have influenced me well the list is long, the music I first got into was probably Pink Floyd, my old man had some original reel to reel studio mixes from them which he used to play proper loud and when your young its well smart hearing loud music, especially if its got mad noises in it. I then got into 'The Doors' and I suppose as I hit High School this is when my influences took a u-turn and I was introduced to electronic music, artists like Orbital, The Happy Mondays etc. Shortly on from this I then discovered Hip-Hop and Reggae, artists like NWA, Onyx, Public Enemy, UB40 and Aswad. 'Soul 2 Soul' in particular were the first electronic influenced group that I paid attention to, even if it confused me at first I was able to work out that the beats were not being played in live on some of the tracks, this was the first time I looked at the production of a track.

What track would you most like to have written? A very hard question to answer, I can't really think of one track but maybe let's say a producer that's totally transformed a sound and come with a totally unique angle, any producer that's made a track that has changed the way in which that style of music's made.

Who's your favourite DJ and why? I don't have a favourite DJ! But I will say that DJ's are the most important part of the musical food chain without them at the frontline whether it's on Radio or in the clubs the punters wouldn't hear and be up to date with all the latest cutz.

Where would you most like to play and why? Glastonbury or any big music festival! The atmosphere is amazing and it's an achievement to be on the line up, it's one of the ways in which as an artist you can really find out how much people are into your sound or not.

Favourite studio equipment? Valve compressor, I love the warmth the valve gives off, it's pukka for recording live bass or any other instrument that needs warming.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? "Don't always watch the levels, its how it sounds that matters" - I've applied that theory lots of times in all the styles of music I've worked in and I have to say its true... you don't need a textbook to tell you how to produce modern music.

What's next for you? Well depends on how much space you've got left in this interview! I'll continue to make DnB and will work towards a label and album myself but not before I've tied up a few of the other projects. Digital has worked really hard and has pushed me to get tracks finished; it's down to him I'm talking with you now, before I met him a few years ago I had no direction and my music was just sitting on the shelf!

The main work is on YT's album (Dancehall, Hip-Hop flavors) is almost complete, it's all voiced and ready for mixing, Maxim (The Prodigy) has produced some of the tracks and also involved are Digital and Innerheart. This will be released later this year on Sativa. We're not rushing it, when it's right its right.

I'm just finishing a remix for 'Lukey D' (Well known Dancehall artist in JA) who will also feature on YT's album, this track will be going over to JA for release there. Also, me and Innerheart are continuing to work on tracks ready for the launch of our label 'Capacity' which will be centered around the artists we work with, we're the producers but it'll be the artists (singers mainly) that'll be profiled, no name dropping on this one! Another project we've just finished is a release for 'Narcotix Inc', tracks called 'H20' and 'The Roof Party', Hip-Hop Funk and breaks.Coming up as well me Digital and Innerheart will be doing another remix of a Salmonella Dub track 'Longtime' which originally featured on their EP 'One Drop East'.

leaders of the new skool

BASIC OPERATIONS

Names: Nathan Hayes, Kevin Jekel & Eric Knight
Alias: Sirus, Focus & Eric Operational
Ages: 21, 25, 26 I think...
Based: North Carolina, USA, kinda spread out; Eric and Nathan live on the coast and Kev is about 3 hours west in Charlotte.

Biggest tunes so far? Well, 'Blue', which is on Total Science's label has been doing well. 'EraSoul', I believe is to be featured on the next Progression Sessions CD has also got a good response. The 'Studio 54' remix for Deiselboy's Project Human seems to be doing excellently! 'Cant take it' on Renegade (a collaboration with Wes Dixon (a local producer) and 'White' for Dylans Freak has also been a pretty big tune.

How long have you been making tunes for? Well I've (Nathan) been working on beats since about 2000, met up with Eric in late 2001 and he got into it around then, Kevin had been working with producers for several years prior but we didn't hook up with Kev till the start of 2004.

How did u get into music? I started out in Boston around 96-97 being real into punk rock and ska music, eventually I got into dub, reggae, roots which led me to ragga/ragga jungle. Somehow in there I ended up going to raves and moving to North Carolina. One day I found LTJ Bukems Logical Progression LP, and that changed EVERYTHING.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing and Production, which would it be and why? Tough question. Couldnt choose something like that... I'd rather play the harmonica.

What kind of music inspire or influence you? Tons of people across the board. Eric is real into Indie rock so a lot of the tunes we've done i.e. "The Chan Dream" have a punk/indie feel to them, other inspirations range from people like Ella Fitzgerald to Calibre, and Coldplay to Herbie Hancock and plenty in between.

What track would you most like to have written? I have absolutely no idea, 'cause if I had made the tune myself, I probably wouldnt like it as much.

Who's your favourite DJ and why? Lots of favorites, but I'd have to say anyone with good stage presence, humility about what they do, great mixes, hot tracks, knows how to build and breakdown a set, when to drop what and so on.

Where would you most like to play and why? We've all got our personal fave's, but I'd like to play a party with like Marcus Intalex, High Contrast, Fabio, Calibre, Stress Level & TC1, Nu:Tone, Commix, JuJu and like Insiders so I could just sit back and listen to all the wicked music.

Favourite studio equipment? Kevin has a bunch of hardware at his place that's always fun to play with, but I'd be nothing without the (not always) trusty computer and software.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? How to get that bass sound I always wanted!

What's next for you? Several more tunes for TOV, work Renegade and Barcode (under an alias), also Klute, Nu Directions, and Blindside, plus remixes for Total Science and Holdtight, collab's with Evol Intent & Tactile. There's also a music video for the launch of Basic Operation Recordings and its sister labels, which hopefully will be up and running soon! I'm going to be working on several film scores for independent flicks this summer and fall so that's great as well... ideas, ideas, ideas.. who knows though, take it all one step at a time.

SUB FOCUS

Name: Sub Focus.
Age: 22.
Based: London. I heard some crazy rumour that I was based in Canada!

Biggest tunes so far? 'Strobe' which is coming out on Ram Raiders 6, 'Ghost' with Danny Wheeler which is forthcoming on Infrared, and 'Acid Test' my new single on Frequency.

How long have you been making tunes for? Since I was 13, just messing about. A couple of years ago I got myself a proper set-up and started taking the whole tune making thing a bit more seriously.

How did u get into music? I started playing bass in a rock band when I was young and drifted into production when I started getting into dance music. Got into D&B about '96 because it sounded like the freshest and most exciting music around and in my view it still is.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing and Production, which would it be and why? Although I love doing both, I'd definitely have to choose production as I could never get bored of it. There are endless possibilities, y'know.

What kind of music inspire or influence you? I listen to ALL kinds of music for inspiration, at the moment I'm really feeling (broken beat act) Jazzanova, listening to a lot of hip-hop, and drum n' bass wise, Fresh is consistently doing it for me. As a drum and bass producer it's definitely important to listen to other music outside the genre to bring something new to the table. With D&B especially there's room for lots of different fusions - been working on a track with a country/western feel to it recently, the last thing I want to do is get tied down to making one style.

What track would you most like to have written? Probably 'Tightrope' by Matrix and Fierce; just 'cos it's a great track with some really bad bass sounds and a wicked roll to it.

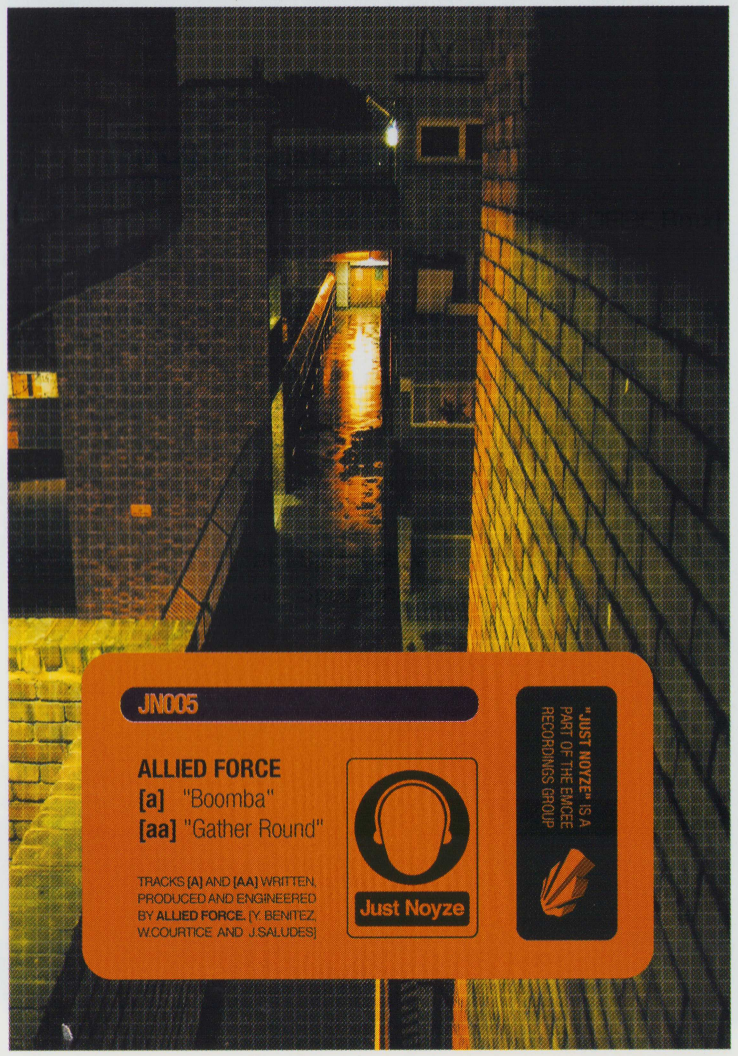
Who's your favourite DJ and why? Andy C, no question. Tight mixing, bad selection and he always gives my tunes great support.

Where would you most like to play and why? It was Ram @ The End, but I've played there now so it would have to be True Playaz @ Fabric cos I really rate the main room sound system there.

Favourite studio equipment? My favourite piece of equipment has to be the computer as I use it for pretty much everything.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? Always work on a vibe, If you ain't feeling it don't do it.

What's next for you? I've just signed exclusive for Ram / Frequency, got two more single releases for Frequency lined up then I've got an album project in the pipeline for Ram so I'm gonna be busy topping up the studio tan this summer.



KEATON

words: JHO Oakley
photo: Ade Osoba

After years of being hidden behind various successful collectives, in the last six months Keaton has finally come to be known as a talented producer and a unique artist in his own right. This was confirmed earlier this year by his massive 'Bring It On' collaboration with America's Hive. In this interview Keaton talks to ATM about his concealed past, his better known present, and what we can expect from him in the future. However, before that, Keaton wants to set the record straight about a few things: First and foremost he isn't American! Secondly, he didn't come into this scene off the back of the success of 'Bring It On'. He's actually been involved in the production of some of drum&bass' biggest anthems of the last five years including; The Usual Suspects' 'Killa Bees' on Renegade Hardware and Universal Project's 'Vessel' on Virus. Now we can begin…

Best known for your productions, what actually came first for Keaton DJ-ing or producing?
"DJ-ing… I started mixing when I was 12 on some old Sound Lab belt driven decks. I actually wanted to DJ Hip-Hop as that was what I was really into at the time, but I couldn't scratch on my decks so I ended up buying stuff like the early Reinforced stuff and the early R&S stuff, music for beat mixing rather than scratching."

So when did Keaton start playing out?
"Started playing out as Keaton from the age of 17, mainly along the South coast. I had a residency at the Opera House in Bournemouth and I played a whole load of boat parties in Southampton too."

How did get the name Keaton?
"Well I needed a DJ name and at that time everyone was kind of just using hardcore names, names that described something, I just wanted a cool name. So, I took the name Keaton from the film The Usual Suspects, as it was a movie that totally damaged me, I loved all the ideas and characters, especially Keaton. I was also thinking ahead; as I thought that if I ever got involved in a production crew we could be The Usual Suspects and all be known for our own identities like in the movie."

When did you start producing tracks?
"Started producing when I was 18, after I'd moved up to Kingston to do a sound engineering course. That was when I met Carl, who'd already done the course and was looking for someone to work on beats with. Around the same time I became good friends with Chris, who was working at the Slammin' Vinyl record shop in Kingston, and he was also looking to get in the studio with someone. So, one night we all decided to go in the studio together and the end result of that night was 'Killa Bees'."

What's your best memory as Usual Suspects?
"Usual Suspects was really special to me because it was my breakthrough into the professional drum&bass scene. Almost overnight, Chris and I went from warm up resident DJs to professional headliners touring the world, on the strength of the first track the three of us ever made."

So if you were already part of one collective, how and why did you come to be part of Universal Project?
"It wasn't planned but to be honest it just happened around the same time that we'd started losing the vibe in the Suspects studio. All the members who came to be known as Universal Project were just good friends of mine, who had been working away on their own beats. Then one day we all decided to go in the studio together just to see what happened and 'The Craft' was the result. We had such a good time making it, vibes everywhere, that we felt that this had to be the start of something. It was…"

What's your best memory of Universal Project?
"Making 'Vessel'; that night we had the best vibe I think I have ever experienced in a studio, there was so much energy, and the fusion of all of our ideas was perfect, bare vibes. At five in the morning, the computer crashed and we lost all our samples, but like soldiers we just carried on and re did it all into the next day. We knew we had made something special, but we never expected the response we got from all the DJs."

When did you really start emerging as a solo artist?
" Officially my first release as Keaton was a collaboration with Stakka and Skynet called 'Isolation' on Underfire. That was quite underground though I don't think many people would have heard of that. The first few things I did as Keaton that people should have heard of were probably some tracks I did with my mate Dom (Dom&Roland). I was involved in a couple of tracks for his EP on Moving Shadow and also a track that featured on his last album 'Back for the Future'."

You've been involved in more collaborative and collective ventures than solo projects, why is that?
"I just find it a whole lot more fun working with other people because for me making music is all about energy and vibes. It's cool working with other people, bouncing ideas off each other, encouraging each other, and if at the end of the day the music is better because of it, it's all good."

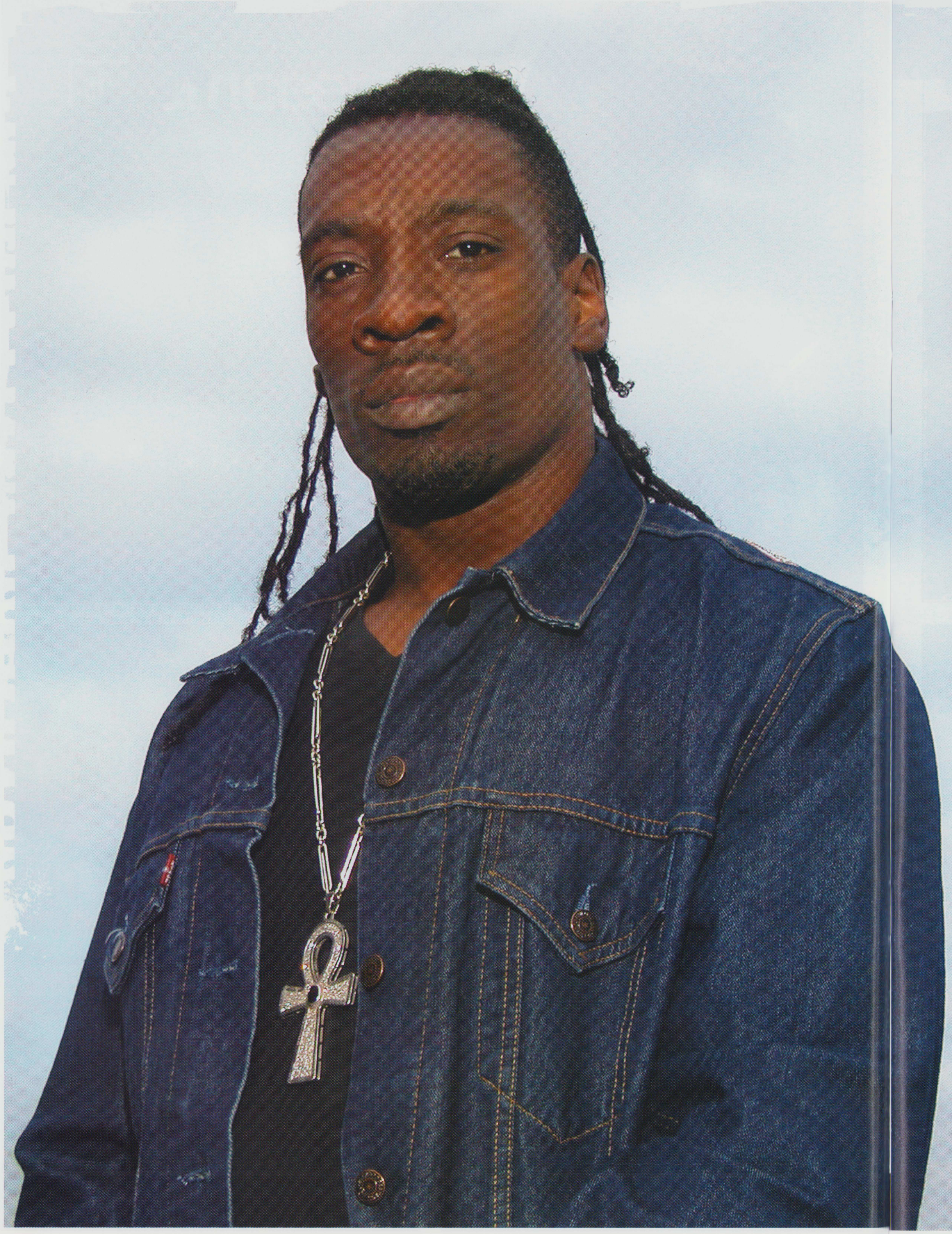
How did the collaboration with Hive come about?
"From listening to his music basically… I could just tell that we had similar musical visions. His music was futuristic and techno influenced, similar to what we'd been making as Universal Project, and he used loads of Hip-Hop samples, old breaks and drum rolls, which is all similar to my sound. So one day while I was touring the States, I just called him up and asked him if he wanted to link. He was up for it, we quickly found ourselves in the studio and 'The Plague' was the result of our first session. We just had such a wicked experience working together that we were both in a rush to get in the studio together again, so that's how the partnership started, and 'Bring It On' followed a year after that.

How would you describe your sound?
"My sound is slowly ever changing, as are my influences and musical visions, so I don't really like to label but I guess right now my sound can be defined by a big hip hop influence, hard metallic sounding breaks, accompanied by my tight drum programming, especially my signature two bar roll pattern, like you find in 'The Plague' and 'The Vessel'."

When working on your own or with just one person, your track titles appear quite profound…
"Yeah, I like my music to make statements you're right, you only have to look at the titles to know that. They're not just random names; they're really fuelled by how I'm feeling at the time. 'Haters' (Keaton&Loxy): That was made for the haters, so if that track offends you then you're probably a hater. 'Invisible Man' (Keaton): That was because I felt I had done a lot of work in crews for a lot of big labels and I wanted some recognition for my own individual input. 'Bring It On' (Keaton&Hive): That was just about me and Hive really buzzing off each other, and saying to the scene we're ready, check this shit out! What are you saying? Bring It On!"

So what can we expect from your own label Refuge?
"Expect cutting edge music, visual music that's not afraid to be different. The first 12" 'No Hope' b/w 'I Don't Give a Fuck'; should be out before the end of the summer and features everything that we've already talked about. 'No Hope' is a really deep one, and I'm pretty sure that you've never heard anything like it."

What else can we expect from you in the near future?
"The Face Off EP'; that's me versus Loxy forthcoming on Renegade Hardware, I'm also gonna be doing something with Loxy for Hive's label Violence. I want to keep working with all the Violence crew; they've got plans for a various artists EP or maybe even an album which I should be involved in. Other than that, there are plans to do a 'Four Horsemen' album for Renegade Hardware; that's me, Loxy, Ink and Dylan. I'm also going to work with Universal Project again, but it would be as Keaton and Universal Project not as part of the crew. I'm not sure about Usual Suspects though, there is talk of us separating but still using the name as part of our own separate identities. DJ wise I'm enjoying playing on my own right now."



MC DET

words: **Ahmed Reset**
Photo: **Ade Osoba**

Any junglist conversation broaches subject of MC Dett will inevitably lead to the same four subjects being brought up: That voice, those lyrics, the size of the guy, and of course the one and only DJ Brockie, you know this of course because you've had this conversation with your mates every time you came home from a rave haven't you!! Well, with over a decade's experience in the D&B MC game performing around the country and beyond, it's not only his physical size that makes Dett an impossible figure to ignore in the D&B scene. With a calendar that sees him working pretty much every night of the week, hooking up for an interview is as usual a complete nightmare but finally takes place in the relative calm and comfort of the Hackney Central bar.

Now, making it as a big-time MC obviously isn't easy but after a three month stint making industrial sized girders for a living (2500 a day) I promised myself I would never again use the over-used adage about a given musician as being 'one of the hardest workers in the industry'. But seriously, the life of an MC can be just as stressful a life and just as much 'work' and Det is putting in a hell of a lot of appearances around the whole D&B scene. "Basically there's an event someplace everyday... believe me somewhere around the country there's a major D&B night going off. At times you could be traveling and working everyday. Me, I usually get about two on a Friday, maybe three on a Saturday and another two on a Sunday, but then there's the weekends when I'll get about five on a Saturday and like four on a Friday and then you just have to cut down. There was a time when I'd try and reach them all but with all the traveling and mad hours, plus the amount I put into a set it can get too much. Nowadays I'll just try and keep it to two a night and have some nights off during the week which I believe is sufficient and allows me to give my all. The hardest part of course is even getting to that stage."

Growing up around the 80's London club scene Det was once part of a young B-Boy crew which is where the name Det originally came from "All the dancers had names, mine was D.E.T which stood for Def Every Time. Gradually through the years the dots disappeared and it became Det, then MC Det. Growing up during this era meant Det saw and had the chance to participate in the birth of the original rave scene and then the Jungle phenomenon first hand. "First it was all Acid House and Electro, which graduated into Hardcore, hardcore music didn't flow like the music of today it would keep switching up, like every eight bars something completely new would come in, but some of the Hardcore beats were actually quite good for MCs which is what lead to the creation of Jungle. Jungle was basically when certain DJ's just started playing certain records with the right beats and a proper flow, tunes that had loops on so you could spit over them. Sometimes some DJs would drop a Ragga tune so you could chat properly for a while and still keep the same vibe."

After beginning to make a name for himself on the streets Det's first foray into proper MC work came courtesy of the legendary Kool FM. Along with DJ Brockie and a whole handful of today's bigger D&B names Kool FM acted as a platform for Det to showcase his talent and make the contacts that would lead to a fruitful career in the industry.

Brockie and Det were one of the first DJ and MC partnerships to begin performing live over records instead of the Hip – Hop / Dancefloor style of recorded vocals that had been prevalent in hardcore. "My first big live break was at a rave called Jungle Fever which was one of the very first big all-jungle raves, me and Brockie were well connected with Kool FM and as we were one of the more popular partnerships we managed to get a headlining spot in the rave." Back in those days getting a headling spot as an MC was no mean feat as people didn't think of MCs the way they do today. "Being an MC back then was not anything like it is now a lot of people in the industry including a lot of DJ's didn't have any respect for what we were trying to accomplish and this would lead to a lot of difficulty. Plus you'd get a lot of people trying to grab the mic saying they were MC's but were just clearly rubbish. Just managing to keep hold of the mic from the beginning to the end of a DJ set was an accomplishment back then. Plus the fact that a lot of club promoters didn't even know what an MC was really, mic's would be poor quality or just not even switched on. Plus a lot of the crowds, especially the outer-London crowds wouldn't understand what it was all about as they hadn't heard us on Kool and the like. The popularity of the MC's really came through when the music started getting less vocal and more beat oriented and people started understanding more and showing more respect to the MCs leading to what we have today."

From the mid-nineties and into the MC crazed millennium Det became an unstoppable force soon becoming a household name in the UK whilst also developing a career as an international artist. Describing his style as 'Soulful, wild at times, repetitive, sensible listening and name checking artists as diverse as Top Buzz to Barry White and the Ragga twins back in the day, "those type of people who do their own thing." Now approaching almost thirteen years in the game one could wonder how these people keep motivated to keep on performing, doing their best night after night venue after venue. "Every club is different, every crowd is different, the motivation is not ever knowing what's going to be happening next. I don't just work in the UK, I work internationally so that motivates you to work harder in itself as your representing for your scene. Every set has to be good if you do one set you're not too pleased with it gives you the determination to make sure the next set is above standard."

Like the majority of vocalists associated with the D&B scene Det is of course mainly known for his rave work and live D&B performances, but has also collaborated on many other projects with some big names throughout the industry. There was the 2x Freestyle project with Skibadee back around 97' with the pair dressed up as the new style avengers, there was his two D&B albums entitled 'Out of Dett' LP and the 'Jungle owes me Money EP' respectively. Then of course there's the Red Snapper tour. "I was on two albums with Red Snapper and then went on tour for about four and a half years. I really did enjoy doing that, we were actually the opening act on Prodigy's 'Smack my Bitch Up' tour. Liam was really into the bands sound and rang up and asked us to open for them. We supported Public Enemy, along with Faithless, Jurassic 5, and quite a few more live bands, we were even Live on the Jools Holland show once. All that side of things inspired me to make the album I'm working on at the moment."

The album in question is an all genre effort featuring some rugged Hip Hop, some breaks and of course D&B, all showcasing the styles Det turned his hand to throughout his colorful past in the music scene. Production wise the albums gonna be co-produced by an all star line up of producers including Breaks supreme Cut La Roc, another name Det came across during his time at the mighty Warp records, The Hip Hop is gonna be handled by Ed Solo and Jerone and the D&B will be handled mainly by Brockie and Ed Solo. I still get a lot of people, like studenty type's walking up to me thinking I'm still part of Red Snapper so I feel I have to do something for them to show them more about me. With the breaks stuff a lot of the D&B listeners haven't heard me like that so it's going to be quite strange for them also. But this is something I want to do so I'm going to go ahead with it anyway and then maybe do another album of pure D&B tunes."

Not wanting to be seen as a seven (seven) trick pony Det is on promotions as well with his 'Knight's of the MCs' brand having done several successful parties and still going strong with events planned for the fall. And of course we can't forget the four star MC line up The Professionals, "We're definitely going to remix 'Flavor for Raver' soon and most likely do another mix of 'Roll out' but that's all I can really say for now, there will be more Professional's stuff, but it's just bad timing at the moment really."

"So what do you get up to when not working?" I foolishly ask. "Well that's obvious... the gym. Now whereas most people will go down to the gym about two – three times a week and do a heavy workout, I prefer to go down there every day and do a smaller workout." The 'small' workout of course is strictly regimented "I'll do my shoulders on a Monday, my arms on a Tuesday, on a Wednesday I'll do my calves, Thursday my chest and just a general workout Friday so I'll break down my body parts like that so I'm not doing too much at any one time. That's why I'm able to do it five days a week. Of course if I know I'm going to miss out on a day because of the studio or something that means doing two body parts in a day. But yeah it helps me chill out and stay fit, I'm an active person."

Any sporting interests? "I do play a little football. I'm an excellent goal keeper man, ask anyone around the scene and people will tell you, Det is a wicked goalkeeper. I only really get enough spare time to get down the gym but whenever like the kids from round my mums way are out playing football I'll join in if I've got the time, there's a boys club near me as well that I was part of for years when I was growing up so I still go down there and kick a ball around or do a bit of table tennis or something." So with all this talk of football what team do you actually support? "Well I support Tottenham, my local, but it seems everyone around me supports the bloody Arsenal.

With a career as long as Det as had in an industry as small as D&B a lot of close relationships are formed and good times are had, with so much to look back on how does Det sum up his thirteen, yes thirteen years in the limelight… "Looking back its strange to think that I've been in the game for so many years, to me its just been like a series of crazy weekends after weekends, its only when someone speaks to you or interviews you and says something like 'hey you've been in the business for over a decade now' that you think, woah it has been thirteen years now and that's a long time. I suppose I'm just pleased to still be here at the front intend to be here for a long time yet."

in da lab: dkay studio tips

Here's are some hopefully-useful inspiration for your studio life and working routine.

The Studio
Set up your studio so you are very comfortable. Get a good table, a good chair, good light etc.

Arrange your equipment so its easy to reach. If you have to move away from your listening position too much to adjust gear, it will be hard to hear outside the sweet spot. If you dont want to buy these things all at the same time, get a decent chair first. Once backpain makes you stop working, you'll remember this ...

The Sequencer
Its the very heart of every studio on this planet, so make a good choice. Many companies offer great products and be aware that it will take time to find the one that suits you best. If you are just starting out, get some freeware or beginners/demo version of some software, there's plenty.

Once you found out which properties of a program you like and which not after playing around with it for a bit, you can dig deeper with more professional solutions. I started out with Cubase on an old Atari, moved on to Cubase on Mac, and finally switched to Logic. Big shout to Dom & Roland, who brought me in on it in the first place. Right now I'm using Logic Pro, as it offers me all the things I want. Cubase is very powerful too and I do fancy it, but right now there's no time to seriously work it out.

In Logic its all about setting up key commands for stuff you use the most to improve your working speed. The quicker you are in getting your ideas to sound, the more creative you can be in less time.

The Monitors
Whatever you know about software or outboard, at the end of the day it doesnt matter. The most important thing in the studio is a pair, or better two or even three pairs, of ass kicking truthful speakers. Top range models are quite expensive, but once you have heard the differences between pairs you will know why. If you need to go for budget speakers when you start out, get a pair that still sounds good to you. That will be enough to learn your sequencer and basic studio things. Be aware though, if you want to move on, especially in sonic quality, you'll need proper speakers. Mackie HR826 seem to be dnb industry standard, I can definitely recommend them. As you can see on the pics, I am using a pair of Yamaha NS10s too. They are / were industry standard in most studios worldwide, and work especially good in the midrange. Switching between the Mackies and the NS10s really helps mixing down and finding a good overall balance to make a track sound good on various systems.

Outboard
Back in the day tunes sounded different. Everyone was using samplers and a desk. These days a lot of tunes are made in a computer only and if you dont know your shit, these tunes will sound weak in comparison to what they could have sounded like, if mixed down in an analogue environment. Im not trying to say computer mixes are not good – on the contrary, you can get great mixes just inside a pc for example, but you have to know a lot of tricks to get it to sound right.

I prefer to mix-down on a desk with outboard compressors, and from what I hear, a lot of people start thinking about desks again. I dont always trust the plug-ins, sometimes I get the impression they are made to sound "like" the real thing, but they dont "do" the same thing to the signal. So I decided to buy some decent outboard compressors to get my signal energized, cause thats what comps are all about! The don in my rack is the Focusrite Red2. Its an amazing piece of gear, using Class A VCAs. Its not gonna change the sound of your signal at all, but will give it enough energy to make it stand out in the mix.

Vocals are a great example. When squashing them up with the Red, you can turn them down in the mix, making room for other midrange stuff, but they'll still be clear and loud, sitting right in front. Done right, this will sound great.

If your bassline plays over a wider range of keys, you'll want every note to sound pretty much at the same volume. Depending on your bassline, high to very high compression is the right answer. The better your compressor, the less you will hear what its doing eg pump, but your compressed bass sound will sit in the mix like a rock.

For drums I mainly use the TLA C1. If I find that the tube compression is a bit too slow for what I need, I compress in Logic, and run the signal hot through the TLA to give it an extra crunch and to smooth out the digital clipping, if any occurs. I rather distort in the desk, though.

Last but not least the Mindprint is great for percussion, dirty amens, or bass riffs and stabs. The compression can be set very fast, which actully can be to much sometimes.

Samples
If you want every creative possibility while producing, make sure all your samples are quality in terms of sound. There's no way of making a kick drum that's weak in the first place, sound as strong as a good version of the same sound would do.

You dont want cheap ingredients in your favourite dish, right?

If you want to use classic breaks, you should buy all the old vinyl to own it, but cds to sample from. There s quite a few 70s funk compilation cds around and you can find great snippets of all kinds, digitally remastered and soundin' clean – a good foundation to make some chunky drums with an original flavor.

The Cheese
Whatever equipment, computer, or software you use, be aware that good music comes from the heart, soul and mind. Music, in its ideal form, should recreate a feeling, transport a vibe, tell a story that moves, or contain a message. It really doesn't matter, as long as the producer was inspired. You can tell the difference between a track that has been forced and one that just flows and flows. These tracks stand out and will catch more than just a few ears and might stand the test of time.

Peace, D.Kay

words: Guy Brickley
photo: Cleveland Aaron

Duncan Busto (aka Spirit) is something of an enigma in the drum & bass world, always maintaining a strong presence with his music, and respected across the board by DJ's and producers alike. One of the many talents to emerge from the unlikely town of Ipswich, along with the likes of Klute, Digital and Photek, Spirit has firmly stamped his trademark sounds on most coveted imprints in the business. Nowadays Spirit is busy running Inner Active Music, a label that not only provides a platform for his own new material, but represents the sound that he has pioneered and developed since the early nineties.

Music and production seemed to be a natural progression for Duncan, from his days growing up as the geeky kid who read Marvel comic books at school (hence 'The Spirit'), to running his own successful label: "I think it just ended up being in my blood… music's always been a big part of my life since I started DJing back in 1987. I was playing mainly hip-hop and funk back then, while I was at college in London. Then house took over, I moved in with an old friend from Ipswich (Dave Campbell) and he ended up forming a techno outfit, Ubik, with another old friend. I used to sit there and watch them work… that's where the itch probably first grew but I never really wanted to go down the 'tell an engineer what to do' route, so ten years ago I finally cobbled together enough cash to buy a sampler and an Atari and that was it!"

Spirit's London house became somewhat of a focal point for the free party scene, with 'The Spirit' (as he was then known) spending hours behind the turntables at their 16 hour legendary house parties.

In 1991 Duncan moved back to Ipswich, where he began working at the now internationally renowned 'Red Eye Records' a week after the shop opened in 1992. His influence on the development of the shop and its reputation has remained until today, and this was the place where a lot of things happened for him as a producer. Spirit was just getting some recognition as a producer, with releases on Timeless in the pipelines and tracks like 'Solar Glide' and 'Synthony' standing out as something truly fresh and musically original. Using the simple equipment he had, Spirit had knocked up a 6 track demo, which soon spread to some of the most influential DJs on the circuit: "My Ensoniq EPS 16+ came complete with a massive 14 seconds of sample time... Tom Klute had an Ensoniq asr-10 and I borrowed that, a cheap 16-track and a dat to mixdown a batch of tracks all in one go. The dat seemed to float around, I think from Loxy, to Peshay and then to LTJ Bukem. One of the tracks Peshay was playing came out on Fresh '86 in '96 I think, then I sent some down to Brillo at Timeless and Bukem was playing one of them at Speed."

The connection with Timeless and the pool of talent that arose from Oxford would prove to be a long lasting one that made Spirit a household name in Drum & Bass: "I was in quite a handy position I suppose because I 'd been working at Red Eye for years, writing reviews for Echoes Magazine as well, so I got to talk to people easily to get tracks to them. One day I called Quiff (Q-Project) to try and blag the mailing list for Legend, hahaha… and it just hit off from there so when I started up, he was interested in listening as well."

This serves as a good piece of advice for any producers out there struggling to get their music out there, and believe it is difficult to network and make the connections. Before he knew it Spirit was hearing one of his tracks played out at the Blue Note Sunday sessions; "Peshay played one of those early things and all I could think about was how the mixdown wasn't right, and how it sounded too fast." Now, the only thing that bothers him when he hears his tunes played out is the pitched up tempo the DJ's play them at. He has no concerns about the mixdowns any more, and justifiably so. All you have to do is listen to a track like '20/20' or 'Chinese Whispers' and you can hear that this man has honed his skills to perfection.

From this point on Spirit began to find his place in the scene, with a steady string of releases on Timeless, CIA and Phantom Audio as well as appearances on Renegade Hardware and Metalheadz to name a few. His production partnership with Digital is still cited by many as one of the most effective collaborations of the past ten years. Tracks like 'Mission Accomplished' on Razor's Edge and 'Phantom Force', 'Mayhem' and 'Gateman' on Phantom Audio, were genuine mood-filled masterpieces that totally defied the sound that was dominating at the time: "I think we had the same visions of where we wanted to go musically but came from different influences as regard pre-drum and bass musical interests. We just basically threw all that in and it was 'see what comes out'. There was also a 'fuck what else is going on' attitude… just make music we wanted to hear. Steve's also got a really natural ear. He could probably take the most stupid sound in the world and make it sound good"

Now they are both concentrating on their own projects, but it is clear that both producers took something lasting away from those collaborations that has reinforced their own ablities and visions.

Inner-Active Music was started in July 2002 primarily as a platform for all of the music that Spirit was making, and now 2 years down the label has a strong and ever-growing following across the world and a sound that is instantly recognisable. Spirit's sound has always been about depth and space, but without sacrificing the elements that will move a dancefloor. I asked him how he achieved this balance: "hmmm.... I just think that's where I'm happiest. I've always been into music that does something to your mind and not just your legs. There are plenty of music forms out there that consist of mindless pap and I don't want drum and bass to be like that. I think there's room for that balance."

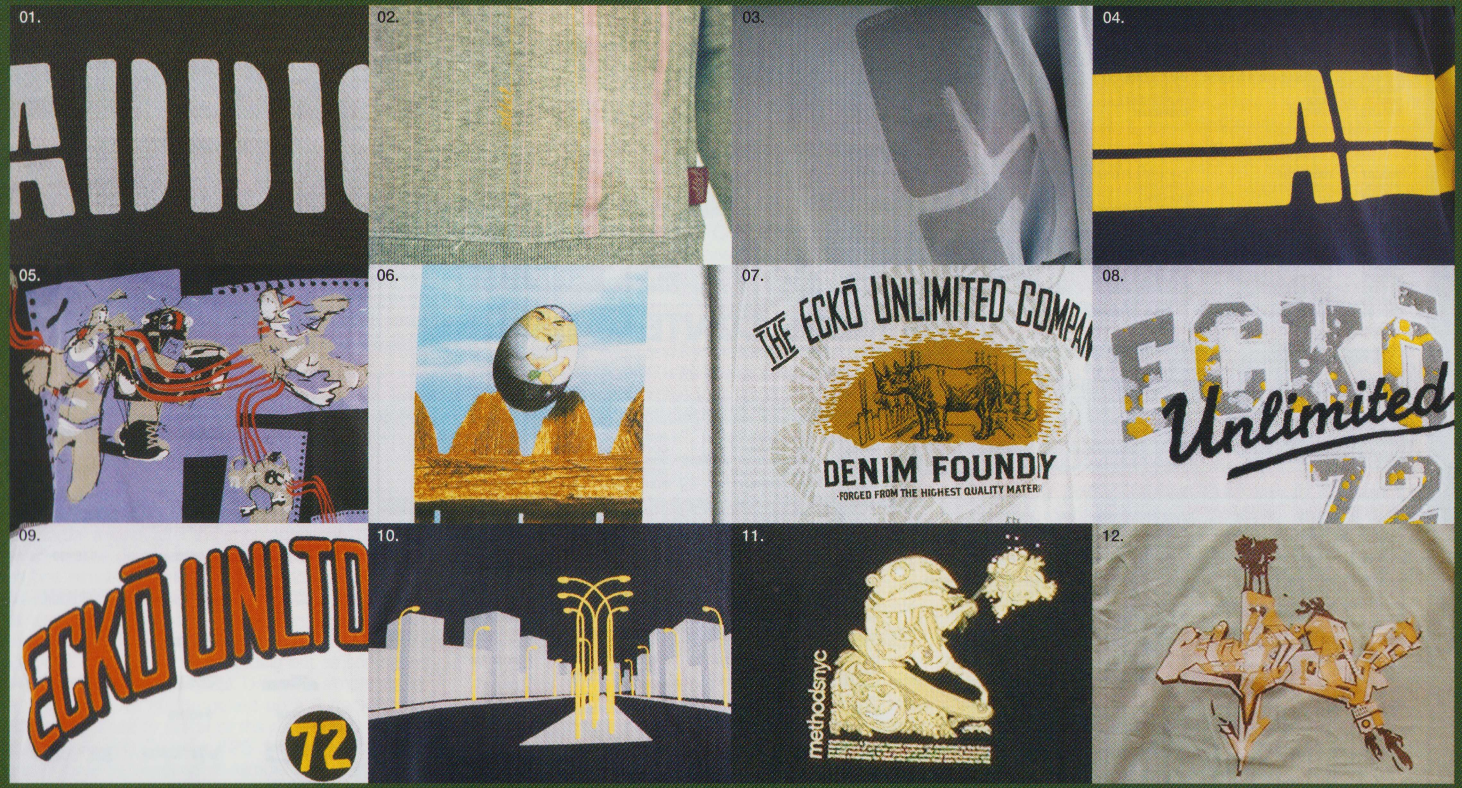
This ethic is carried through to the label, and now Spirit is finding more time to put out music from other new talent who he feels fit into this uncompromising category. Amit's 'The Myth' had DJs and label A&Rs desperate to hear more from this groundbreaking producer that Spirit had firmly championed and supported since day one. The latest release on Inner-Active comes from Welsh talent Cujo and in the pipelines are tracks from newcomers Outrage, Heist and Tactile, so clearly Spirit is keen on showcasing the myriad of young producers that fit into his vision of the label: "I'm not sure if Inneractive has a sound as such. It has a vibe but it really is just simply about releasing music that I like. As I said, there's a lot of variation in this forthcoming stuff and all I really want is to release good music. I would say there's depth to pretty much all of what's coming in one form or another. I'm enjoying putting out some great music from other people.. it all needs to be heard and it also keeps me on my toes as well."

After 10 years of making music, Spirit is also working on his first solo album which is scheduled for release in early Spring 2005: "I'm enjoying that a lot. It really is seeing how far I've come. So far there are about 5 tracks in production. It's cool because I can envisage where they're going to be in the running order and I can work around them when they're finished. It really does take a different train of thought after years of twelve inchers. Nothing has to be 'this long' or 'that short' so it can fit onto a piece of vinyl."

Like most DnB producers Spirit has to squeeze the album project in wherever possible, amidst DJ gigs around the UK and Europe, running a label and keeping some kind of personal life going. It certainly isn't an easy task, but Spirit aims to get it finished by October, until when it will be strictly under wraps: "It really would be nice just to concentrate on the LP and nothing else, but I still have to keep the 12"s coming alongside to keep the bills paid!" The next 12" from Spirit 'Four Walls' is set for September release so that should keep us sweet until the album drops. Also planned is a mix CD showcasing Inneractive's past and future releases that should open the sound up to a whole new non 12" buying audience.

Spirit clearly has his work cut out for himself in the next year, but more music from this legendary producer and the Inner-Active camp can only be a good thing. What keeps him going? "The main influence at the moment I'd say is coming from a combination of trying to go further myself and from the stuff I'm releasing from everyone else. There's a freshness there and a real hunger for music."

And as long as there are producers and institutions like this around this hunger is sure to continue…



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HOSPITAL

words: Jo Sharff
photo: Cleveland Aaron

Nu Tone

High Contrast

London Elektricity

Cyantific

Gathered in the basement at the Hospital office in West Kensington are four of the key players; London Elektricity, High Contrast, Nu.Tone and Cyantific aka Tony Colman, Lincoln Barrett, Dan Gresham and Jon Stanley (the other half of Cyantific, Matt Whitbred couldn't be there). They are huddled in a familiar stance, reminiscent of the one that was made nearly 30 years ago by the ubiquitous band Queen for the front cover of Bohemian Rhapsody. Looking at them Tony seems to be getting far too into this photo shoot – there's a cheeky smile on his face: "I snogged to this song at my school disco when I was 15" Ah well then, fair enough – always good to relive those key moments in your misspent youth!

Along with everyone who works in the office it is pretty crowded right now so Tony suggests doing the interview at the pub. Sounds good to me. Along the way I find out that they are soon to be moving offices to South London "its next to Crystal Palace, so I might start supporting them" muses Tony. "It's going to take a while as I'm moving house at the same time". It is clearly a hectic time right now so no begrudging a few swift pints at lunchtime!

It is quite obvious to see that over the past year Hospital has defined itself as one of the most prolific dnb labels, due in part, from the seminal talent that sits before me but also due to the success of the live shows that London Elektricity have been performing. A scary undertaking for a drum 'n' bass outfit – nothing like this had really been done before, without the help of computers: "The first time was in Edinburgh at The Venue and I was really sweaty. My hairs were plastered to my forehead and I was shitting myself," recalls Tony. "But it was good though, it was a proper grimey gig and everyone was jumping around by the stage." Lincoln who was at the gig adds, "people were getting their tops off on the dance floor and really going for it." So after that did you know you were onto a winner? "Well I don't know, we were just so relieved because we'd put so much work into it and we really thought it might be shit but it turned out good so…" modestly put by front man Tony. However, Lincoln was adamant that it was something special: "I was in the crowd filming and I could see immediately that there was something there and it would definitely work."

At this moment in time London Elektricity are all about the live shows: make of them what you will but truth be told, they've got some bottle. Such a bold move could make or break you, especially without careful planning. But as I found out it has been a long and tiresome process for both Tony and Chris (Goss; his business partner and runner of the label) to get to this stage: "we made loads of mistakes with our previous label Tongue and Groove that weren't big enough to bankrupt me and Chris but were big enough to be valuable lessons. I think I've made all the mistakes with the previous label, which really laid the groundwork for this one." Mr Colman obviously has a bit of nous and is quite the shrewd businessman and this isn't a bad thing –he's just worked hard and has been paid dividends. The live show didn't just spring up overnight. It came with thoughtful decisions. For example, when it came to getting the band together Tony shopped around: "I'd spent years looking for the right drummer before I could take it live and I saw Nicky (Blackmarket) in his shop and he told me that he'd been working with Jungle and to check him out" Along with Lianne Carroll, Andy Waterworth, Landslide, Stamina and Wrec or SP and of course Tony the band would be complete.

So with the success of the band and the accompanying DVD that's out now what's next? "I'm writing the next album, which I am very excited about – more so than the last one because I think having been on the road with the live band gives me perspective." Clearly Tony has his live venture to thank for a lot of reasons, not only economically but also creatively. "The last album I wrote I spent a lot of time DJing. With this album I'm taking into account how tunes work on stage so I have a totally different perspective. I think I've always been over concerned about not being too accessible with my music and I've always been a bit paranoid about that so I've always tried to force it to be deeper than maybe it should be so I'm going to go the other way with this one. It's going to be nice cheese as supposed to horrible cheese."

Quite surprised to see how reflective Tony is I promptly turned my attention to someone even more profound: coined the "Welsh wonderkid", High Contrast is up next.

So many DJ's and producers around today will continue to preach about how music is their life, always has been their life and that they could not imagine doing anything else – they were born to do it – bollocks, that's just boring. You know the story before you even hear it – it would go something like this – "got into records from whoever, bought a pair of decks, worked in a record shop, went to this night, met this person, started making tunes". – Bam that's it. Sorry to offend anyone out there – there's no doubting ability, skill or accomplishment but it's more interesting talking to someone who didn't know where they were going right away. For Lincoln Barrett this was the case. He did a BA in film and was always intent on being a writer or director: "I had no interest in sound until I was 17, I was all about visuals but I basically lost faith in it and found my place in sounds." So from having a good eye for images, he developed a good ear for sound: "I think I've got an ear for spotting a good sound and a good hook. I use sounds better and I'm drawn to certain sounds that I want to put in my tunes." However, the fact that he was such an image guru has become incredibly prominent and instrumental in the way he produces. Most artists tend to write a track and then name it after they've got a feel for it. For Lincoln, he paints the picture first: "yeah, before I've made a tune I think of a name in my head and then build from that idea and find sounds that go with that name and fit connotations from the name. I spend a lot of time just thinking up good names and work from there. I try to get the finished tune to make you think of something. I want people to listen to one of my tunes and it remind them of something."

When a person listens to a song it's all about something being stimulated – a feeling, that instant or moment – the juxtaposition between hearing a song and what it represents or prompts or that's what it should be about. Many believe that music is the most powerful medium in which the brain is stimulated. In the same mind as this Lincoln explains how it works for him: "I'm not interested in making songs, I like the things that sound like songs and remind you of songs, rather than actually the songs themselves because writing a song means you're caught up in the hysteria of the moment of creation. I prefer to step back from it – there's a distance between the creative process and me. That's why I like sampling because it's capturing the moment that has already taken place."

Wow – this man has some serious depth to him, but it all makes sense. What he's talking about is a voyeuristic process and that's something that we can all relate to – everyone is a voyeur in some respect. It doesn't have to be some weird sexual perversion – it can be as simple as observing everyday life and processing the thoughts. "I am a voyeur. I've always felt like this ever since I was a kid. I've always felt a distance between me and reality and its as if I'm watching everything going by and taking it in and formulating something in my head about it and then it comes out as something and at the moment it's the music."

It certainly is about the music right now for High Contrast. His first album "True Colours" was critically acclaimed and with the imminent release of the second one, it is shaping up to be one of the most eagerly anticipated dnb albums out this year. Having already had a taster with the incredible "Twilight's Last Gleaming" smashing it all over the shop for months now, the album is sure to be a killer. Is this one going to be similar to the first? "It's a continuation. Some things have changed though – the production has improved a lot since the last album. Sonically it's a lot better. There is more of a felling with this album – it's called "High Society"" The more time you spend with Lincoln the more you realize how introspective he actually is. With a name like that there obviously has to be messages somewhere: "There's various meanings but the most obvious ones are how a lot of street culture and DJing culture have been homogenised by mainstream high street culture, like the BBC having their logos on T.V with DJs and skateboards. It's just all a bit overplayed so I'm switching it and saying well here's a jungle album but my reference point is taken from the high society and I'm referencing things from say, the 18th century and completely switching the iconography associated with the music. On the first album all the titles were positive affirmations and they were all revealing truths, whereas this album is more about façade and make believe. This is me questioning. I'm not saying I want to be high society, I'm taking on the paraphernalia and just questioning it really."

With words like this I'm thinking that maybe Lincoln should be Hospital's spiritual mentor. Although in some ways he has brought magic to the label. He had a lot to do with the fact that I'm sitting here with both Nu.Tone and Cyantific. However, they all say that Jon B needs to take the initial credit. Both Dan and Jon came to Hospital partly due to tip offs from Lincoln. Cyantific especially, were an intriguing addition to the label, quashing any pigeonholing of the label as purely a soulful one. They bring something a little more raw and edgy to the label, particularly with their latest tune, "Little Green Men" and Jon and Matt were the first to admit how surprised they were at the signing, as Jon explains: "yeah, it's a good thing that we bring something a little different. When we made it the last thing we thought was that Hospital were going sign it. We were thinking that they were going to hate it but Tony loved it and Chris liked it too. We didn't expect it".

"Little Green Men" is a cool little old skool number with a really eerie feel to it. It is clearly evocative of the type of music that Cyantific have been in to, as Jon recalls, "The sort of stuff we used to listen to was like Acen. They got it just right with that weird spacey old skool stuff. Some of the early Prodigy stuff too. A few years back when there was an old skool revival in dnb, there was a side of it that got overlooked and no one really pulled it out. Then the stuff that Total Science and Digital were doing was wicked but that was more of an early hardcore angle, whereas "Little Green Men" is more of a tribute to the earlier stuff – more acid house bordering with hardcore."

Out of the four men sat here Jon is without doubt the quietest and most reserved, but there is no doubting his talent. He reminds me of David Beckham in his modest and soft tone. Like Beckham he is quite obviously passionate about what he does and when asked about preferences over DJing or production he is certain in his answers: "No question, production, there's a lot more satisfaction from making tunes. DJing is great but it's a quick fix". Saying that though, when the subject of DJing in Eastern Europe comes up Jon is the most animated of the four. There is something about places like Budapest, Vienna and Prague that wants the DJ's going back for more. Many of the UK DJ's including Marcus Intalex, Calibre, DJ Lee, Roni Size, the Hospital crew and many others are regulars out there and say that the clubs out there are some of their favourites in the world. What is it about these places? "They just really go for it out there" explains Jon. "When I played in Estonia they knew all of our tunes. They knew "Twilight's Last Gleaming" and this was ages ago. They just go mad and it is so satisfying to get a response from every tune and not just for the sake of it but because they are actually enjoying it".

Dan is also keen to voice his opinions: "I think the further east you go the newer drum 'n' bass is. You're not playing to a Headz crowd as much and you can really play what you want. They just go mental because it's dnb. When I played in Macedonia I played super soulful and they were screaming like I was playing Dillinja!" Jon is certain that Hungary is the one that sticks out for this year. With people like Chris Su and SKC bringing out some bad tunes, as well as Tactile who are signed to Digital they are all putting themselves well and truly on the map. Regarding their production Jon explains: "they have progressed so much, they're upping their game and they have extended their sound from techno and hardcore to more soulful stuff."

Dan is eager to compliment the Eastern European contingent as well: "They are really good engineers. All their mix downs are really fat. It's all made for the dancefloor."

What is interesting as well is that having spoken already in the interview to all the guys about their opinions about DJ's being pigeonholed, the European artists are once again given all the credit as Dan explains, "they are not pigeonholed at all – maybe that's something to do with being outside the UK as well. They have no preconceptions or stereotypes that we can sometimes have." Dan Gresham is someone who definitely doesn't fit the drum n bass stereotypes of today. Everyone knows by know that he is a fully ordained priest, which basically means he did what Joey in Friends did – he can perform weddings, funerals and baptisms in the States. Blatantly he had far too much time on his hands! Elsewhere though, he is constantly reinventing the scene with his awesome tunes and remixes and has just brought out a "The Future Sounds Of Cambridge" EP. Cambridge is hardly the epicentre of drum 'n' bass but that's the thing – Dan doesn't have any preconceptions: "Yeah, it's me, Logistics and Commix but that's 3 guys and we're just all friends and go out together. I know there isn't really a dnb scene in Cambridge but we're just all really into it." The thing is, these guys are all really on it right now so why not? Logistics especially has been having a lot of exposure with his wicked track "Together". As Logistics is Dan's brother is there any rivalry? "Not at all. It's been so much fun seeing him coming through and develop". Matt (Logistics) is the younger of the pair but it was in fact him who got Dan into the whole drum 'n' bass thing: "Yeah, he got me into dnb when he played me the Roni Size "Music Box" album years back. I was in America at the time and he was back here and I came back and he made me listen to it and it blew my mind." Two very talented producers that together, also fit well as Nu.Logic. They must be really similar in many ways, blood being the most obvious but working together is not as simple as Dan illustrates: "It tends to be things that Matt starts and will hit a brick wall and then I come in a give a different angle and help with the mix down or whatever. It's always something that he starts and I finish. We work in very different ways so it's always interesting to see what Matt has started and then adding what I do."

Dan was classically trained and has perfect pitch, a rare gift, which means he can tell what key any tune is in. This probably means that he is a lot more versatile in the studio and would play around a lot more. Many producers are happy to use samples in every tune that they make but this doesn't mean that they are going to be the best tunes. "Ebb and Flow", which will be on his debut album, is one of Dan's finest tracks and is all original music. However, he explains how he spent a lot of time trying to make it sound sampled, "well, I say trying to make it sound sampled, what I actually did was treated it like a sample, so made my own little loop and sample and chopped it up and then ran with it, rather than having separate elements." It is a lesson to all budding producers, that not all tunes have to be sampled and that both sampled and original music have their merits: "I think if you leave things as separate elements you are tempted to fiddle with them too much but as soon as you start treating it like a sample there's a unit and you're treating it as a unit rather than all these different elements." Dan will surely use all of these components on his album, which will be out next year on Hospital.

Musical, technical, influential, mindful and above all versatile the Hospital boys are well ahead of their game, bringing out a wealth of new and exciting material and making their mark wherever they go. All four of them have albums on the go so the label has a bright future ahead. Back to the present though, who's for another pint?

INSPECTAH DECK

words: Jesse Keene

I guess Introductions are not really needed as far as this heavyweight of the microphone is concerned, so consider this of a build up of sorts. Based at the forefront of the Staten Island crew the now legendary Wu-Tang Clan Inspektah Deck has enthralled audiences on a global scale with his ill rhyme flow and raw subject matter. Whether performing with the Wu-Tang or dropping some solo business with local NYC crews and beyond he is always at the top of his game lyrically and ensures that he always keeps his moves positive and ever progressive within the hip hop sphere. Now with the release of his new solo album "Movement" (US import only so far!) which has received a warm response from fans old & new and has once again set the scene nicely for future solo projects. So with tour dates confirmed from the UK to Istanbul it looks like things are going to be getting extremely interesting as far as Inspektah Deck and the rest of the Wu clan is concerned. Here is what Deck had to say on life in Staten Island, Tours and the return to the 9th Chamber, a man would be wise to heed the warning sign's... Enjoy!!!

If you could take us back to When you 1st got into the Hip-hop culture, who would you say were your major influences and how did they effect the music that you now make?

Inspektah Deck: when I was growing up I was influenced by a whole bunch of stuff like Big Daddy Kane, NWA, Slick Rick, Kool G Rap & Polo, BDP and Rakim you know those cats really inspired me to get into rhyming. Back around the way you know Staten Island is a small borough and with the birth place of hip hop being the Bronx where all the mc battles were going on we kind of got left out so we got our own thing going on with our own local heroes. I have a lot of influences from people I grew up with who never made the limelight. Cappadonna is one of those people. He's been doing his thing since way back when I was young. So it's a mix of things you know, the music and the people that surround me on a daily basis all have an effect on my music.

Could you tell us a bit about projects you have recently been involved with, and also could take us briefly through the new album was there any message that you were try to make the listener pick up on?

Inspektah Deck: The Album Movement is out now, its been doing well. Kind of promoting itself from the back of other projects that I have been doing. With this LP I am trying to show that you don't need to drown your album out with guest stars and features, you can hold your own whether the beat is wack or not. As an mc you should be able to deliver something that is going to catch peoples attention. See we got kids growing up following our ways and we need to set a good example for them. Like everybody I know don't wanna go to school any more, they want to be rappers cuz hip-hop got so influential over here. I'm just trying to show people the reality of it all, you could turn up at a club with a million dollars worth of jewellery on and a fur coat or some shit and I can turn up in a sweat suit with Puma trainers on and I'll still tear the house down. You know what I mean... So that's what the Album is all about. Its not about the money, its about your skills on the mic. But as far as other projects go things are seriously busy for me right now, I have got the Best of Inspektah Deck mix tape which I put together with DJ 45 and another mix tape called "The Underdogs" which is with my group House Gang. We've been circulating that around Europe at the moment. In fact we have just got back from a tour out there and the tapes have been going down really well, a lot of positive feed back which is good. So I'm now in the process of putting The Underdogs vol2 together as well as working on my new album which I know I told people in a couple of interviews earlier that it was going to be called Ghetto Child but I have changed the name to Return of the Rebel cuz this time round IM gonna hook things up with the RZA again and get them fat tracks out there like the fans want us to...

That leads me to my final question, how are the tours going? Are you getting a warm reception from the crowds and are there any other tours and future projects that people here in the UK should know about?

Inspektah Deck: Yeah the reception we have been getting is definitely good you know, it's like every where we go we been tearing the roof off. It don't matter if it's a concert arena or a little local watering hole. We've been doing what we gotta do no matter where we play and we've been getting good reports back from the fans. So right after the Wu-Tang tour I'll be going back on the road again and doing a few dates in the UK & Germany. I'll possibly be bringing Street Life on tour with me and you may see Reakwon & The GZA at a few of the shows so it's going to be busy, plus as you know I'll be working on the new album The Return of the Rebel and that will be some real Wu-Tang business going on, a return to the 9th chamber. I'm gonna give the heads the album that they originally wanted to hear from Inspektah Deck, you know what I'm saying. So people need to be checking for that in the near future....

For more information on Inspektah Deck, Tour dates or any other news on the Wu-Tang Clan's movements check out: www.wutangcorp.com

DILLINJA

words: **Sam Smith**
photo: **Cleveland Aaron**

Karl Francis, aka Dillinja is one of D&B's most prolific artists. He has been a bass-head from an early age, vibing off copious sound systems like King Tubby's or Main Attraction throughout his not so mis-spent youth. In 1993 the man of many names struck gold with one of his earliest attempts in the studio, 'Sovereign Melody' was forged at the tender age of 16. His talent was soon recognized and a string of releases on Drum & Bass' biggest labels, including Prototype, Metalheadz and Philly Blunt, ensued. The next natural progression was to lay down the foundation and build his own camp to represent his unique flava. In 1997 he hooked up with long-time friend Lemon D, to spawn jungle's most bass heavy label, Valve. The seminal 'Acid Trak' smashed down for Valve 001, and the precedence was set.

Hailed as the 'king of bass' Dillinja has been responsible for killer tracks like 'Threshold', 'Tudor Rose', 'Nasty Ways' and 'Good Girl' to name a few, and it's his unique brand of relentless bass and crashing beats that have shot this South London lad to D&B stardom. A mentality of constantly pushing his studio equipment to the limits has always separated his sound from the rest, as if he's on a quest to find the lowest subs and the loudest drum. Running on this philosophy, and inspired by the sound systems he listened to as a kid, Dillinja and Lemon cooked up the concept of Jungle's most destructive force, the Valve Sound System. Unsatisfied with weak systems that couldn't handle the bass they were producing, they toiled day and night until the bass heavy 96k beast of a system was finished. The rest, as they say is history!

For 2004 Valve has opened it's gates to new artists for the first time with Friction & Nu-Balance, Miracle, and Craggs & Parallel Forces to name but a few making future contributions. Dillinja's latest project is an album entitled 'My Sound' which is a journey of his music from early releases like 'Threshold' on Prototype, through to hot off the press smashers like 'In The Grind'. The album will feature his best tracks new and old. Big Bad Bass rolls on over 2004, so ATM caught up with the bass-master to find out why it ain't too loud!

Where did it all start for you, musically?
I started off listening to electro, then went to hip-hop, I was into the breakbeat stuff, like Big Daddy Kane's 'RAW', y'know? Like all the old hip hop that was using amens, and to me that was it. You could dance to that music. Then, when hip hop moved over to more kicking snares, and became all about lyrics, and the gangster shit, that's when I eased off it cos I was more into the beats. After that, I moved onto house cos that started using the amen breaks. That's what made me get into the House thing, and then I started learning about all different styles of House like the Detroit sound. I've been through all them different journeys.

You've talked about bringing back the breaks, how's this affecting your production?
I've always used breaks but, what I'm tryin to do know is get more intricate beats. Gotta learn the good bits about a beat first, gotta understand it, then start cutting it up. I've heard a lot of new cutting stuff, and it's not cutting right man. People like Photek, a lot of the old things, they're the sort of things that were cut right. I'm gonna take it to the next level, I can't be just cutting up old amens like that. We gotta start cutting new sounds otherwise its gonna seem like the same old thing brought back. What's the point in making the new one if it's not gonna sound as good as the old one! What I'm saying is I'm gonna be cutting new breaks, and doing it with a fresh approach!

Have you got plans to do some liquid / deeper bits?
I am gonna do some things, but I'm not calling 'em liquid you know? I'm gonna make some blazers! You can make a smooth tune, it doesn't have to be banging, but if the production's right you can mix it into a hard tune and it won't stick out like a sore thumb. A lot of these weak productions you play 'em next to a hard tune and it doesn't fit in at all cos the mixdowns are so weak. The dynamics are just wrong.

So kind of like liquid tunes but with your philosophy of keep everything hard edged?
A banging production, hip hop production. Like you listen to the hip-hop out there and the mixdown is spot on. There's a universal sort of mix now that people are following, and there's some liquid people following that and that's wicked. People like High Contrast have got it right, and a lot of the Hospital guys, but there's a lot of other people who haven't. Obviously Calibre's got it right with a simple melody and a nice fat b-line. It works, people don't stop dancing when it comes on.

Do you think it's harder to express that deeper sound cos people want dancefloor?
Course it is, man. You know what, I'm gonna cut down on the DJing. I think its very important that I do that because it does influence me. Before, I've gone a little deeper on something then gone out and got no response, and I've had to take everything out of the tune that I've put in, and just do a basic little thing with an element of a smashing, banging tune.

What up coming producers are you feeling right now?
Cragg's & Parallel Forces, feeling them. They use like seven or eight breaks in some tunes. They're doing a lot with that shit. A-Sides is doing some wicked stuff. You'd think he was on fucking Dread or something the way he's going on right now!! Clipz has done some good things as well.

After the success of the 'Killahertz' can we expect another album from you and Lemon?
It seems like its me and Kevin, but they're label albums. Now it's growing to what I wanted it to be which is compilations of all the artists which are signing up. More of a 'Platinum Breaks' Metalheadz sort of compilation, y'know? I want to get to a stage where I can put out an album where I've got like 15 artists on, and tour and things like that. Its gonna be the first time Valve will tour, all over Europe, and the UK as well. I'm looking forward to that, cos that's the stage I want the label to get to. You've gotta find someone with potential, and I think the best way is to teach someone and train 'em up. I never had the help, but the help is available now, so I'm gonna give it to those, that's my mission.

So you'd say it's a big focus on the next generation?
Yeah, I wanna look at Valve as a fucking label that covers all different styles and artists, not just me and Kevin. I've always been straight to the point, I don't fuck around with my tunes, if I wanna smash I'll smash, y'know? I don't really beat around the bush, but I still would like to experiment with some different flavours. And there's a lot of flavours, that aren't being used in D&B now, and I think we're missing out on a lot, shutting a lot of doors. Saying that it's getting better at the moment, starting to open up again. It's pretty hard when a lot the new guys have been brought up listening to D&B, and they're locked off from the outside world in terms of influences. They're not hearing old influences. There's people like Pendulum, the intro of 'Vault' is like an old Detroit techno intro, and I'm feeling that, but its not new. The stuff Fabio used to play in like '89, he had a whole box of that. But a lot of new skool kids ain't gonna know that, cos they're only like 17. There's not much good dance music around to get influenced by, not at the moment.

It's kind of like how the Raves have changed, cos back then you used to go somewhere and hear all sorts of styles and music in one night?
Yeah, that's right, you get the full spectrum. The crowds full spectrum as well. You'd get hip hop heads, people into deep house, all kinds. you had such a mix, people who were into all sorts of music, but that was good, that's what brought the energy. Cos it's like refreshing for everyone, cos they'd go out and hear everything, there was a lot of different flavours and that's what made it exciting.

Bit more of a party vibe?
That's right, at the moment it's a narrow thing. But saying that I'm positive because it's gonna get better. I'm gonna do my bit, Valve are gonna do their bit, to make sure this thing gets better man.

You work with a lot of vocalists, who would you most like to work with?
I don't know! The last singer I had has gone now! She moved to America... she's done an R&B album, she wrote 'Butterfly' for Michael Jackson, loads of big stuff, so I'm looking for other vocalists. Basically there's gonna be a lot of album projects that I'm gonna be working on this year.

Not just Drum n Bass?
All kinds of stuff, all kinds. Hip-Hop, and D&B, but focusing more on the singer, not just the producer, more like Hip-Hop. It's been tried years ago, Dynamite's done it now.

That Dynamite album's wicked..
It's not enough though is it? Commercially, how the fuck is this thing gonna stay up? And start getting recognition in all the big stores in America? Not when there's two fuckin artist CD's coming out every 6 months. We need to get the distribution deals for places like that cos it'd help everyone financially, help the scene.

It's hard to get a break in D&B, what's your advice for up and comings?
It's hard work bruv. I feel sorry for up and coming kids right now, cos it's so hard for 'em man, unless they're making tunes. The dream of the bedroom DJ actually getting out there has kind of died. They're not seeing anyone get through, and that's why record sales have gone down as well, It's dis-heartening, I don't blame 'em for giving up cos it's hard. I'm telling ya if I was new in this game and I was just playin tunes, I'd have to be best friends with some good producers or something.
Fuck it… like hand spins on the decks man! Or five deck mixing!! And getting tunes off all the top producers at the time! It's madness man, like Friction is the only one who's come through. It shouldn't be like that you know? It'll fuck the scene up.

Do you think some of the old names are a bit blahzey with the way they DJ?
Some are, some aren't. Andy still gives it, I was watching him the other day and he's still in that style. I can't knock him, he does what he does and he's brilliant at it. He makes the effort every single event I've seen him play. You know what, to some of 'em, they won't admit it, but they're not in the music as much as they were. If there was a lot of good stuff out there, they'd be in it hard, trust me. There's not enough flavours. Imagine DJing every night when most of the tunes in your box are in the same vein.

What you feeling about Nu-Skool jump up?
Same as it was 10 years ago, it ain't changed, same thing. I ain't got a bad thing to say, its all good. Its just all the other styles have died out more, and that's going strong right now. It needs to be there, a lot of young people love that style, MC over it, and it's lively in that corner.

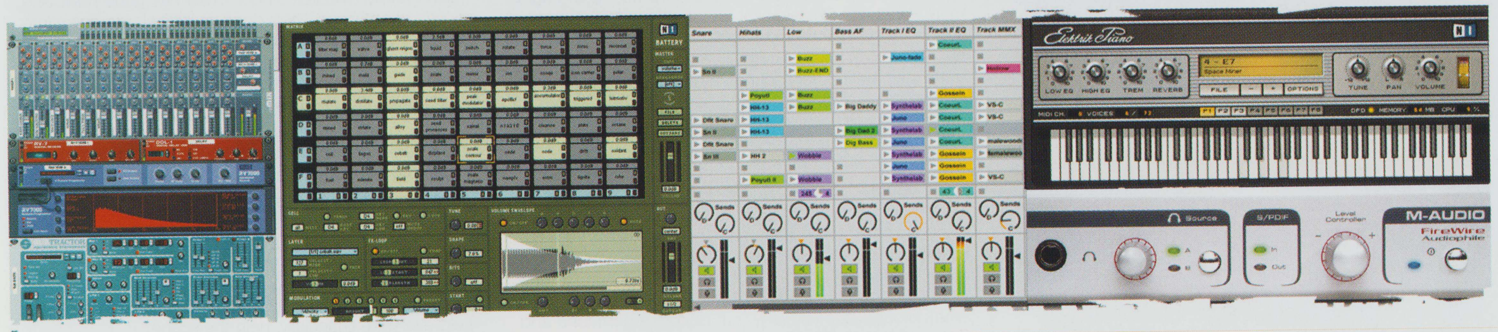
How do you feel about the whole internet thing?
Yeah, those fuckers don't even go out man. I put on a Killahertz launch party, and we thought lets have a look on the net the next day, and there was like only two fucking geezers that went to it. Like what the fucks two people out of like 1700?! At the end of the day they don't go out, they don't rave to the music or buy it, y'know? Then they sit there and cuss it all day on the Internet and know nothing about it. I read the comments on big tunes, and they're slagging 'em off, and I'm thinking 'you ain't been out!' That tune's smashing it everywhere! You must be locked in some fucking closet! That tunes killing it, and you'll look on some other post, and some shitty little tune that sounds like poop, and they're bigging it up, y'know? As far as I'm concerned, most of the geezers that post on them forums are c**ts! That's that!

What future plans have you got for the Valve system?
Yeah the tour thing, basically I wanna start doing the live thing also. I wanna put a band together, but with the system. There's only so far you can go with computers.

How's Plastic People running?
It's alright, but it's hard work. I need a Saturday. Wednesday is a chilling night, and Valve ain't a chilling night, y'know?! The bass is tearing your fucking lungs out! I'd rather do something like that on a Saturday or a Friday night, but its hard in London.

Is it right that you want to build a permanent home for the Valve System?
If I had the money I'd have a club right now! I'd love to, just set it down and leave it, and with the other half do regular things. I've got this regular thing I do in Birmingham every 3 months... at certain nights you get the true ravers, y'know? London's the worse one, I hate playing in London, everywhere else is off the hook. There's places I'll always wanna do like Birmingham, and they're just waiting for us to come down there. Everywhere we go we let the local vibe do their thing. Its their thing, and it is funny to watch 'em all, they've got their own followings, y'know? You get that up North. New shit going on and people going off the nut, you know what I'm saying?
Dillinja's 'My Sound' is out soon on Valve. Sam

ASK THE DJ



Well it's time to put mouse to monitor again for the Equipped section, and as ATM has reached the ripe old age of 60, and the Editors hormones are up and down more than his pants, we've got a special little something for ya... A beginners guide to Drum & Bass production.

Firstly, unless you want to spend millions on Hardware rack equipment (which you will in time), you will need to start with a decent computer, and go for the software production method. I refuse to get into the whole PC or Mac debate anymore, as I've come to understand with age that it's solely down to personal preference (although Macs are far better and I've got a G5 so ner ner...). Anyway, any desktop computer with over 512mb of memory, 1Ghz of processing power, and an 80 Gig Hardrive should do the job for starters. Laptop computers are also particularly useful, as you can make your music on the move.

Secondly, you need a decent in-out module for your sound, which is where the M-Audio Firewire Audiophile comes into play (especially for laptops). A neat looking silver box, with a sexy blue LED, that fits snugly into any studio and will only set you back £150. The Audiophile is a 4 * 6 24-bit/96khz mobile audio/midi interface. As it uses Firewire as the main connector, it's ultra high bandwidth and ultra low latency, which is exactly what you need. Also to be found here are 2 analogue RCA inputs and 4 analogue RCA outputs, coaxial digital S/PDIF I/O, AND 1 * 1 MIDI I/O, plus a dedicated headphone output and front panel A/B switching facility, allowing perfect real-time cueing between sources.

The kit is controlled with an on-board integrated software mixer, which allows virtual aux sends on all channels, with every function being totally assignable to your mouse or panel controls in real-time ASIO. Numerous producers are using this piece of kit, due to its flexibility, portability and cheap cost, plus the quality of audio you get out of it is stunning, and there's even a spare Firewire port for that all important 'Daisy chain' method of linking devices. Easily installed and compatible with Mac or PC, on virtually any operating system, the M-Audio Audiophile is a necessary purchase for the D&B producer. Check M-Audio.com for full details.

Ok, you've got a computer, and you've taken care of getting the sound in and out, now you need to hear the sound. A pair of powered monitors (i.e each one self contains it's own amp) is what you need now. These start from around £300 for decent ones and the purchase choice is once again down to personal preference, although you cant go far wrong with a pair of Mackie's. Oh yeah, and some decent headphones (around £100), as you don't want ya mum or neighbours murdering you for repetitive sub-bass looping syndrome.

So that's the sounds taken care of, now we need some software for producing our music, i.e a sequencer. Cubase or Logic, are the first choice sequencer for the deadly serious producer, and in time, you will move onto these programs when you become more advanced in your methods. However, an application that's fast becoming a regular source of production tool for the first- timer's and big names alike is Propellerheads' Reason. Retailing for around £250, this app is a virtual studio, and contains everything you need to make, produce and master your own tracks.

On launching Reason you are presented with an empty rack, to which you can build your very own studio. The possibilities are endless here, with no limit on the amount of kit you can generate (the more processor power your computer has, the more kit you can generate). The sequencer bay is available as a detachable window if needed, which is great when running dual monitors, and is perfectly capable of all sequencing duties for the amateur producer, although big names such as Fresh and Liam Howlett have openly admitted on forums that some of their biggest tracks were solely produced on Reason, so don't believe every professional rumour you hear.

But the fun part is building your equipment rack. Starting with a mixing desk, you can add around 20 pieces of different kit, from the drum module to the polyphonic or graintable synths, from the highly acclaimed NNXT sampler to the versatile Rex player (for all your DR Rex loops created in Recycle, the globally recognised loop slicing app), onto the pattern sequencers, the reverb units, delay lines, filters, sound destructor units, CV merger and splitters, Phasers, the list really is infinite, like I said, your own virtual studio! The sounds that come from each piece of kit are provided by Reason Refills. These are patches you load into the separate units, choc full of more than enough different sounds, from virtually every musical genre, with extra Refills available freely or for a small price on the Internet. Plus most pieces of kit on here will accept Wav or Aiff files as well, so you can load in your own personal sample collection. To control the sounds you make, a small £80 purchase of an M-Audio Oxygen8 Midi keyboard controller wouldn't go a miss. All the kit in Reason then becomes fully controllable and assignable to the keyboard. (I.E, when you twiddle the knobs on the keyboard, the assigned knobs on the screen kit move in-sync)

Many people in the know, in the scene, can't say enough good things about Reason, and it will definitely have you making your own D&B tracks in no time, plus when you become more advanced in your production techniques, Reason uses a clever built in application called Re-wire, which allows it to sync perfectly with Cubase amongst others. This now gives you a one-way ticket of full routing abilities of all your Reason devices through to the infamous town of plug-ins. This is possibly the only function some people say Reason itself is missing, as so many producers rely on plug-ins to get their sounds right, but I heard a well known artist state lately that "if you need that many plug-ins to make your sounds right, then your sounds are wrong to start with", can't argue with that!

Now if you want to record any audio into Reason, like a live guitar riff, or some vocals, then (unlike Cubase or Logic), you're going to need an extra application such as Ableton Live, to get the audio into the sequencer. This once again, uses the Re-wire function. Ableton have been producing Live for a long time now, and it is critically acclaimed as 'one of the best live sequencing instruments around', perfect for loop manipulation, and famed for it's real-time live beatmatching facilities, it's a music-production solution that allows you to spontaneously compose, record, remix, improvise and edit your musical ideas. Live has so many functions; I couldn't list them all, so here's a brief overview.

The musical sketchpad: or main workspace, viewable in Live's session view. Mainly working with 'Clips', each clip holds a musical idea, phrase, melody, loop or even complete track. You can add these 'Clips' to your Session in real time by dragging in audio or MIDI files from Live's built-in Browser, or record new "takes" without ever stopping the music. Each clip contains its own play button, allowing you to "launch" them at any time and in any order. Live's Arrangement View is the multi-track environment where it all comes together, offering unlimited 24-bit / 192 kHz multi-track hard disk recording, full MIDI sequencing and complete automation for every mix and effect parameter (including song tempo). Every edit is non-destructive and revertible thanks to unlimited undo. Live can manage any number of audio and MIDI inputs and outputs. Plus, drop a software instrument in a track and just play! Live! Get it?

Add MIDI effects, such as Scale, which forces all notes into a desired key, or audio effects like Chorus, Auto Filter or any of Live's other plug-ins. Live's Track View shows how the signal flows, with meters between the devices, and provides you with direct access to all device controls. There is also a built-in Sampler, just grab any piece of audio, drop it into Sampler, and play it across the keyboard. And yes, it supports VST plug-ins, what more could we want? Live 3 is priced at around £250, or for £60, you can upgrade your old version (with Live 4 due to be released soon). A small price to pay, for such a creative tool. Head off to ableton.com for some more in-depth spec.

So now you've spent around £1500 to £2000, and you're getting pretty tasty at production. You've got a computer, monitors, a sequencer, and a live audio capture unit, what's next? Well, at this stage, you will be looking at expanding your talents, as you should be using Reason in conjunction with Cubase through Re-wire by now, as mentioned earlier, to add some new functionality and sounds to your musical weaponry arsenal, Native Instruments, the masters of Cubase, Intakt and countless other software classics, have just released Elektrik Piano, and Battery, as VST Plug-in units (that run as stand alone's as well), both of which should help you add some new angles to your production.

We will deal with ELEKTRIK PIANO firstly. This unites four of the most beloved E-pianos of all time into one software instrument, which reproduces in exacting detail the sounds of the Fender Rhodes MK 1™ - including 27 instrument versions, Fender Rhodes MK 2™ - 19 instrument versions, Wurlitzer A 200™ - 21 instrument versions, and Hohner Clavinet E 7™ - 22 instrument versions. All of the above are classic old-skool pianos, with many big names using the rich and colorful sounds they produce on many of today's biggest liquid D&B tracks. The level of sound reproduction is stunning, due to each individual key of the hardware predecessors being meticulously sampled to include such detail as the entire release phase, and various velocity levels also.

Depending on the instrument, ELEKTRIK PIANO offers various effects for creating instrument-specific effect sounds, including chorus, reverb, phaser, and tremolo. Each instrument also includes a wide selection of ready-to-play presets, which can be grouped into individual performance sets for quick recall of presets during live performance using the computer function keys or a MIDI controller, (Altered sound settings can be saved as new presets). EP comes with a PDF file of all the preset sounds that come with it, which is well laid out and great for referencing when things get a little confusing.

There isn't a massive amount of tech spec to spout about this application, as it's basically "some piano's", but after you've been producing for a while, mark my words, you will discover that a good piano is hard to find! And there's loads of em here! Elektrik Piano is another classic from N.I, it's fun to play with, runs on Windows XP or Mac 10.2.6 or higher, looks good, and sounds superb, plus it weighs in at a measly £150 and isn't too heavy on CPU. Check www.ni-elektrik-piano.com for availability and more info.

Now, drum programming, is without a doubt, something that will take a long time to get the hang of, and even longer to master, which leads me nicely onto the second release from Native Instruments, and the last and possibly most crucial instalment in our tuition. Battery, is a drum Sampler (A little like the Re-drum module in Reason), designed for percussion sounds and well-suited for pitched sounds, which intricate Amen's and breaks all contain plenty of.

It has internal 32-bit resolution and reads samples in the following formats: AKAI S-1000™, SF2™, REAKTOR Map, LM4™, AIFF and WAV, from 8 to 32 bits. There are more than 30 high-quality sound-sets with 590MB samples of all music styles included, plus you can 'drag and drop' your own drum samples into the cells provided. The screen is laid out with 54 sample slots, each with 128 velocity layers, tuning, volume envelope, pitch envelope, bit reduction, shaper and FX Loop for innovative effects, with a real-time Waveform Display, so just drop the samples in, sequence the pattern, add your effects, and watch it all happen! More drums than you could shake a stick at! Boom boom…

This is an application that provides a ridiculous amount of control over your drum sounds, which is essential for all D&B producers. It tips the scales at a poultry £150, and once again is available on XP and OS X formats, or as a VST plug-in or stand-alone unit. www.native-instruments.com will give you a more graphic overview of this essential product.

So we've reached the end of the road with our beginners guide to Drum & Bass production. I hope you've learnt some handy tips for making your own tracks, we've got a computer, some monitors, an audio/Midi I/O box, a sequencer program, some VST keyboard and Drum programming plug-ins, a controller keyboard, and a live audio capture application, and by my reckoning we've only spent about £2500, a very small outlay for what could be the best move you've ever made.

From small acorns, big trees grow…

UNITED
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world scenes: holland

words: Laurent Fintoni
photo's: d-boy (bassground)

Globalisation is not a term you would automatically associate with Drum n Bass, yet it has never been more relevant to this music than today, with a scene gone global in the last few years in all meanings of the word. After years of UK dominance both in production and DJing the scene is enjoying a global expansion that has taken many people by surprise. From the Aussie sounds of Pendulum, to the Latin tinged rhythms of Marky and XRS, DnB isn't just a London ting no more.

Holland holds a place in many a junglist's heart for its widely available herbal remedies, yet it also holds one of the longest running electronic scenes in Europe, with the early rave and techno sounds nurturing the birth and growth of what would become Dutch DnB. Take Dreazz, one of the Dutch originators, who turned his love for the music into one of the most successful DnB related companies, Triple Vision. With a shop, record labels covering techno and DnB, distribution company and some of the biggest parties in Holland and Europe, Dreazz is best placed to let us know how DnB grew up Dutch style. "In 1992 I discovered breakbeat and rave and in 93 I started a small fanzine for about 50 people. Through this I started selling tapes and second hand records which I bought in the UK. I then met up with Nubian (another scene originator in Holland) and we started a bedroom style shop, which slowly grew into Triple Vision. At the end of 97 I split up with Nubian and went solo and in 1998 I met up with Edge of Motion, two techno veterans of the Dutch scene, who I managed to persuade into starting a label. We started Black Jack, Piruh and Fokuz (most notably Piruh's first release was from Black Sun Empire) but closely after the first releases they lost interest and so I started a new label called Citrus and continued to do business with Fokuz and Piruh, using their strength in the Techno scene to push the early DnB sounds. We had no artist yet for Citrus until I met up with Falcon. We did one tune together, and then released about 30 tunes from Falcon solo, as well as more collaborations together on labels like Citrus, Ohm, Synthetic and more. We had one anthem that sold over 8000 (and is still selling 25 a month) a remix of Jill Scott called "It's love" which helped to launch us internationally. This led us to playing abroad a lot and it all just progressed from there. Party wise the same happened. We had been doing small things from early 95 and it just expanded. Now as Major League we do the biggest raves in the country with around 1500 people each time and at least 4 UK headliners alongside Dutch and European talents."

This DIY ethic that helped launch Triple Vision is a perfect example of the strength and resilience of a scene that has survived in a country dominated by Techno and House. By joining forces with producers and people across music scenes (including techno and hiphop) DnB was able to impose itself on the Dutch musical landscape. Black Sun Empire (B.S.E) who also come from a breakbeat and techno background, are another perfect example of this Dutch resilience. They emerged on the global scene and found acclaim from producers and fans worldwide after getting their first major break in the late 90s through Fierce's DSC14 imprint. The release of their first LP, Driving Insane, earlier on in the year only helped to cement their reputation, and with support from DJs worldwide they have proven that now more than ever DnB is a truly global affair. And as seems to be the case for most people in Holland they aren't just stopping there, instead helping their home scene to grow further. They set up their own label to push home-grown releases and that of other European producers, such as Rawthang and Benjie, and have an established monthly night in Holland, Blackout, to which they regularly fly international names alongside local talents. "The best aspect of our scene is that it's quite open to new people who want to get involved. Of course it will never be easy to make it as a DJ or producer, but we do see a very good community growing."

Another Dutch characteristic that always comes up in interviews with DJs and producers is the public's love of all things hard and heavy. No doubt an influence of the prominent Techno sounds, it seems the Dutch public just love their DnB fast and hard. Dreazz notices that sometimes it can prove difficult to try and open the public to other styles because "Dutch people like it hard and nasty, which automatically means there are loads of productions that are not good enough for them." BSE admit that their most popular productions have been those that cater to the more dark and techno-y DnB spectrum, yet it seems that things are changing as more international names come through and open up the public's ears to what makes DnB such a wide and varied musical genre. BSE note that at their nights "people seem to like all genres of DnB, DJs get to play whatever style they like and are not really tied to the latest fad." Adi-J and Nuala from Dutch based international female DJ Crew B.A.S.S also point out the public's love for harder DnB but are confident that as more people come into the scene and open up to it, other styles are starting to take hold. Dutch DJs are open to the variety that today's DnB has to offer and producers new and old are also all keen to prove that they aren't just one trick ponies. People like Falcon and Dreazz, DJ Predator as well as Th'Acquisition are already offering mellower sounds, and a different approach to DnB and labels like BSE's and Triple Vision will only continue to open the minds of the Dutch public by not concentrating on just one style.

The scene itself attracts a wide variety of people to the nights, and even though the tendency seems to be towards darker DnB, I had the occasion to experience smaller local nights that catered to a wider musical spectrum, more representative of today's sounds. The Bootleg Café in Rotterdam holds a monthly night from 9 till 6am with DJs coming through and playing whatever they feel resulting in a more interesting experience as people sit down and chill in a venue no bigger than most London bars. When we spoke Adi-J and Nuala emphasised the open mindedness and variety of Dutch crowds. "The crowd is very different in each part of Holland and it even differs from one location or club to another, Amsterdam seems to have a more 'mature' audience, which also counts for Rotterdam but as soon as you get into the countryside the average age is 16 to 22 yet all this remains a kind of underground public."

This combination of new and old followers, from all backgrounds and walks of life is another strength of Dutch DnB, mirrored in the wide variety of nights on offer in Holland. And in such a small country it is surprising to notice that most nights have been going strong for a few years and show no sign of stopping. The four major crews in Holland cover all of the country with Triple Vision parties in most of the country, while BSE take care of Utretch, Bassground (Retox) play around Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Denhagg and then RedZone cover the Eindhoven area and bits of Belgium. These four crews are helping push the smaller promoters to do better and are fast gaining international recognition, with big name DJs always flying in much to the pleasure of the crowds.

Another important aspect of the Dutch scene is the emergence of MCs. While the Dutch are not an English speaking crowd this hasn't stopped MCs coming into the game and being recognised and appreciated by the crowd for their diverse and unique lyrical styles that nicely compliment the work of the DJs. The main MCs are MC Jay, MC Dapper, MC Pat and MC Proskript.

Though DnB has become popular throughout Holland and put the Dutch on the global map as fine purveyors of dancefloor mayhem, the popularity of the genre in Holland is seemingly still underground and will be for years to come. The stronghold that other electronic genres such as Techno or House hold on the general public is unlikely to fade just now but Dutch DnB is constantly progressing on many levels, and reaching more people. New labels and nights are starting all over the country pushing the sound and the scene further. As BSE point out "we don't see [the scene] getting bigger yet, but it is a strong scene. People who are in it are very dedicated." It is this dedication amongst other things that makes Holland one of the strongest and most interesting scenes in today's global DnB.

Useful links for more information:
www.triplevision.nl
www.blacksunempire.com
www.bassground.com
www.basscrew.com
www.drumandbass.nl
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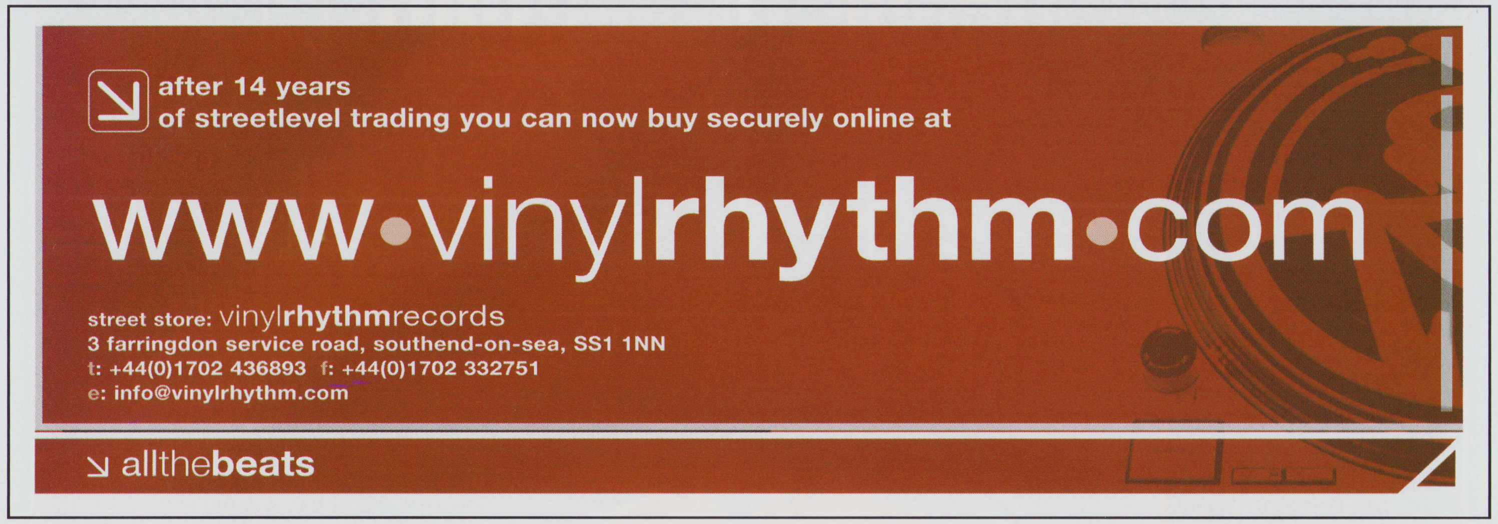


RESONANT EVIL

words: Francesco Caccamo

Like Voltron's younger but slightly darker and noisier brother, Mackie, Audio and Wrisk come together to form Resonant Evil, a sinister Drum 'n Bass-producing machine, ready to do battle against the forces of dancefloor stasis. But Mackie, the crew's most talkative element, notes that the analogy goes further than the unison between the trio of producers and their fourth "unofficial" member Nexxi, who is the 'head' (in 'Voltron' speak) of the operation, taking care of the administrative side of Redhill camp's mini-empire, consisting of Gain, G2, Triple Six and the Spin Technicians DJ Agency… "You could see it as Resonant Evil being the body, with Renegade Hardware, Outbreak and G2 being the operational parts, in the sense that these are now the forged outlets for our music." …a powerful axis of labels to be allied with by all measures. But let us trace how the relationships within the crew itself came into being, and how in turn the crew's relationship with these labels developed to the point where Resonant Evil are now firm Hardware and Outbreak favourites, and have just finished the honourable mission of mixing the CD version of Outbreak's fearsome debut album, the aptly named 'Biological Warfare' LP, which should be in your shops by the time this interview goes to print.

The first bond was secured when Mackie and Wrisk hooked up and started to produce together, leading to the creation of Gain Recordings…"Wrisk and I (Mackie) met up on the south east rave circuit which we were both playing on. We then started working on tracks together and made a demo that we wanted to press off our own backs. The girl who we asked to press it for us really liked it and passed it on to Vinyl Distribution. They were in it as well and encouraged us to start a label, and in 2000 Gain was formed. At that point we weren't really involved in the scene or thinking of starting a label, but we were ruff and ready and learnt our lessons fast." The 'arms', or rather Mackie (who supplies the push behind the operation) and 'legs', or rather Wrisk (the fast-moving creative force in the group) were now firmly in place and fully operational. They were soon joined by a calm and collected organizational 'head' in the form of G2 and Spin Technicians' female boss Nexxi…"She was more savvy about where we could take ourselves and the label. She taught us how things were done and put us in touch with the right people. Then Dylan asked us to start a label for Alpha Magic because he liked what we were doing and G2 was formed. Nexxi takes care of that and she brings through a lot of new artists like Monkey & Large and Pollen, as well as taking care of the day to day running of Gain, Spin Technicians and Audio's new project, Triple Six Recordings."

Gain and G2 grew steadily and began to make a name for themselves. It was at this point that the final piece of the Resonant Evil mechanism, the 'body', fell into place: Audio, the dark heart of the crew…"I started getting into Drum 'n Bass around the time of 'Dead Dred'. I went off it a bit but when 'Wormhole' dropped in '97 (he says showing me the Virus tattoo on his forearm) that changed it for me. From then on it was dark, hard DnB all the way. I eventually got a PC and taught myself production by reading manuals and surfing the net. I just caught the first wave of software-based producers and that's where I got my name from." Mackie reminisces on how they first hooked up…"We got to know each other again through the rave circuit and he used to bring tracks to me and Wrisk at Gain. Initially I didn't like his stuff much and I was pretty honest about what I thought. But his learning curve was steep and he soon came to me with something I couldn't ignore. He then came down to the studio to work with us. It just went off and Resonant Evil was created."

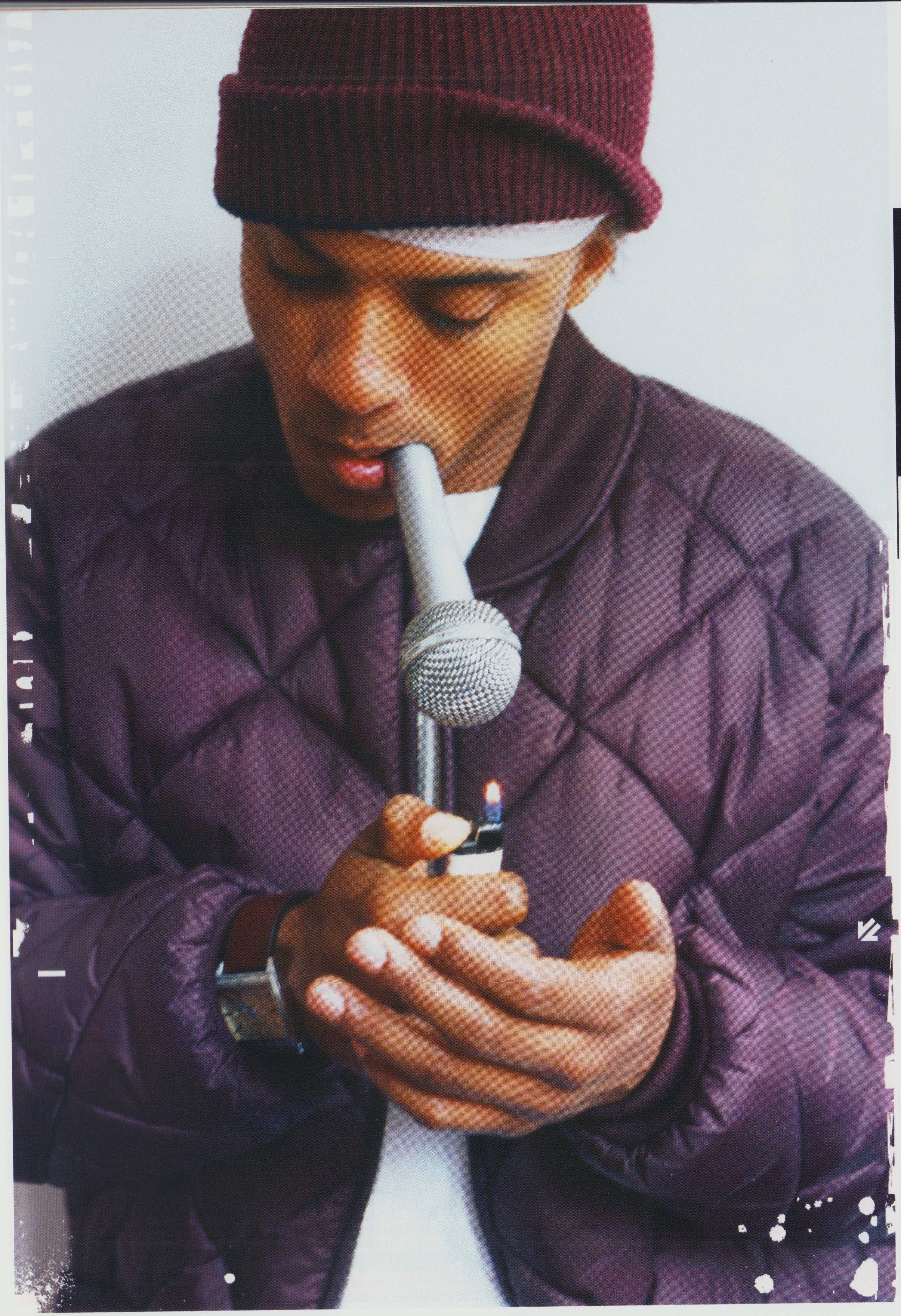
Some say three's a crowd, but the Resonant Evil boys seem to have found the winning formula, as Audio explains…"We all take little turns on tunes. With 'Wrench' and 'Troubleshoot' we were in the studio together for the whole time, jumping up and down and going crazy. But now that we're comfortable with each other, we rotate." Mackie continues…"We've all got different characters and attributes. I'm more dancefloor than Wrisk and Audio. Wrisk is the eccentric musical one while Audio is out and out dark. I think the quality of each tune also benefits as it has three quality controls to get past. We make a good combination because I tend to work a tune to death while Audio knows when to step back when it's not worth it anymore. Technically, I'm no engineer, but I know what the other two are doing and my technical lingo is up to scratch, so I can jump in at any time. Audio and Wrisk take care of that side of things. Wrisk is the sound man and the melody man, and he knows how to get a crisp mix down, while Audio is all about the detail and the darkness. I bring structure and feel to the tunes: an executive producer of sorts. I'm directly involved with the scene so I'm in the position to know what will work or not and to relay the feedback we get."

The newly formed outfit were an almost immediate success. Through working at Alpha Magic, Mackie became close with the Outbreak camp, but it was their run away hit 'Troubleshoot' which brought them to everyone's attention …"Originally we perceived 'Troubleshoot' as being part of a four track EP for Outbreak. A few people cut 'Troubleshoot' and went down to Southampton where they were up after Andy C, and as they walked into the club, they heard him playing it. The news came straight back to us and we were shocked. The track got around fast and the next thing I knew Clayton's on the phone asking me for 'Troubleshoot'. He really wanted it and we really wanted it to go on Hardware so it was pretty difficult to say no." All that then had to be smoothed over was the tune's transition to Hardware…"Outbreak actually still own 'Troubleshoot'. They licensed it to Hardware, and also to React for the Drum 'n Bass Arena LP. As this split up our original EP, Outbreak licensed out 'Troubleshoot' on the condition that we committed to another five tracks for them. We can't complain because at the end of the day that's what made us, and it all came from a tune that we thought wasn't that good."

This turn of events consolidated their relationships with Hardware and Outbreak, and there are a steady string of Resonant Evil tracks waiting to be unleashed. Look out for forthcoming EPs on Outbreak and Hardware (which may feature a 'Troubleshoot' remix), and 'Hells Angel' on Hardware's sister label, Barcode. In addition, there are twelves on the way for G2 and Twisted Individual's new label 'Up Yours', as well as remixes on Damaged Minds and Signal. But most significantly, Resonant Evil's DJ talents have been enlisted to mix the CD version of Outbreak's forthcoming album, 'Biological Warfare'. The seamlessly mixed CD, which in the words of Mackie marks Resonant Evil's arrival, features the album tracks which are to come out as two EPs – the first entitled 'Genesis' consisting of four new tracks including their own 'Black Zodiac', and the second entitled 'Rebirth' consisting of four remixed Outbreak classics including a Raiden rework of 'Wrench' – along with a 'best of' selection from Outbreak's back catalogue. The CD also includes Bunker Buster VIP, another Resonant Evil track, but with the added twist that it is downloadable as a 320 bitrate mp3 from www.outbreak.co.uk before its eventual release in September.

Forthcoming releases aside, Resonant Evil also have an extremely interesting live project in the pipeline involving the ex-guitarist of Generation X and a singer called Elizabeth Westwood, who sang on the eighties hit 'Sonic Boom Boy' (sing along all of you who remember). Audio has a clear idea of where he wants the project to go…"It's essentially a band. We think there's a niche in the live market where you have Reprazent and Hospital doing their things, but no live acts that cater for the darker, angrier side. We're basically looking to take up where The Prodigy left off. We're not only looking to do Drum 'n Bass: we want to leave our stamp on Hip-Hop, Trip-Hop and Breaks as well." Make sure you keep your ears pricked up for the ominous guitar rumblings set to resonate from Redhill in the months ahead: Resonant's 'Evil Empire' is about to get a grungy!

For bookings for Resonant Evil or any of the other Spin Technicians, contact Nexxi on (+44) (0)7863167419, or check: www.spintechnicians.com



words: Mark OD

DYNAMITE MC

World Of Dynamite is finally upon us. The magnificent debut longplayer from one of the most talented MCs on the planet is well worth the wait. It's set to transform the larger-than-life Dynamite into one of the hottest artists in dance music. Not only does he excel in his native drum and bass tongue but he also works his magic on ragga-soaked hip-hop, bubbling garage and stuttering breakbeat, showing he's one of the most versatile and charismatic characters in the game.

It's an age since news of his album first surfaced. It seemed like a done deal for it to be released through Talkin' Loud until the labels bubble burst. This hit Dynamite hard. "The whole situation with Talkin' Loud was quite an eye opener for me, I thought everything was going to be hunky-dory, it was signed with a major record company. You sign a deal, you sign a contract and then you start recording it, its finished and its ready to come out and then they tell you its not going to happen. They take the ground from under your feet but I had to turn it into a positive. It knocked me sideways a bit, but then I realised I had to do it myself, I had to be strong."

Turning negatives into positives is part of Dynamite's philosophy. In the aftermath he could have signed to other labels but instead decided to be "strong" and take control of his own destiny setting up his own Strong Records to put the LP out on his terms. "It's a lot of work to do," he motions. "I've got a good team of people. You definitely get to control it a lot more and you're supporting yourself. You're not going to let yourself down. When you say you're going to put this record you're actually gonna do it, there's no allowance for it not to happen. If you're in your car and you decide to turn left, you're gonna fuckin' turn left, if you're in a car with a chauffeur and you say turn left you might go straight ahead."

Broken into three parts the LP is intended to represent the experience of being in your favourite triple-level club. Not only will this make it more palatable to purists who stick like mud to their favoured genre of music, its also going to be sold in three separate parts on vinyl so whatever your style you can bust it. Overall the album's whole is greater than the sum of its very fine parts and Dynamite's buzzing with the final product. "I'm very pleased, he says. "It's difficult taking so many producers and different styles of music and expected it to gel but I felt like it did gel. The way I've packaged it with rooms 1, 2, 3; it makes it a little easier to go from one room to another. It's like its not a shock, like one minute you're listening to this and then something else and you're like what the fuck is going on? It makes it a little easier to go from one tempo to another."

In W.O.D you've got the best of all worlds. The roll call for the LP is an outstanding all-star line-up of producers and MC's who help mash genres and blur boundaries. Dyna hooks up with Skitz, Stone & Elephant Man for his hip-hop beats while also dropping one of his own productions making you wonder 'is there no end to this man's talents?' Wookie, Zinc and Fuzion help out with the garage while longtime brethren Roni Size, High Contrast, Origin Unknown, Marky & XRS, Kalm and Skibadee make the drum and bass a heavyweight package. The end product is one of the most ambitious LP's this year bar none. While Wiley might be the voice of grime or Rodney P top cat in hip-hop, Dynamite proves he can bust it with the best of 'em and actually stand toe-to-toe in their own yard.

Is there one track that sums you up? "The whole album sums me up, he replies. "I'm aggressive I'm Hotness, I'm summertime I'm Riding. I'm switching my voice, I'm ragga. I couldn't just do sixteen tracks like 'Feeling' (Marky & XRS) or I'd have to change my name to Julio Englais! Or sixteen tracks like 'Hotness' it would be too intense just screwface all the time. It's my first album; I've got a blank canvas, 74 minutes I can do sixteen tracks, so I want to do sixteen different reflections of myself. I don't want to talk about bass all the time, I wanted to talk about me or talk about whatever. So one track I wanted to be funny like 'Rush The DJ', one track I wanted to be conscious like 'Visions', one track I wanted to be fast like 'Gold'. The whole album is a balance, it's like me - a little bit of everything."

'Ride' the sing-along discofied number and the biggest tune from the LP to date is still dominating the airwaves and 'Hotness' out of the Ram stable has been a club banger for some time. On promo at the moment is the fast and furious Full Cycle flavour of 'Gold' produced by Sir Roni where D hits the fast lane and powers through the track. On the flip is the momentous 'The Scene' - a celebration of all the movers that shake up the drum and bass scene, it might be an obvious idea now but Dynamite got there first and he's done it proper! Add more feel-good sunshine vibes from Marky & XRS on 'Feeling', and a cameo from Skibadee 'Over Here Now' and you've got a tasty selection.

Maybe surprisingly for Dynamite's drum and bass fans, the standout material can be found early on from Skitz and Stone. Dynamite's no newcomer when it comes to dropping hip-hop styles. He was brought up on it and has worked with Skitz before (Countryman LP) The Nextmen (Firewalking) and subsequently with Die & Skitz on the 'Its On' club firecracker.

After the LP opens with a cinematic orchestral rush and snippets from classic and instantly recognisable Dynamite moments from the Reprazent era, "Step To The Rhythm Laid Down Brown Paper," "Who Told You," Yes Something of a Different Pace", "Coming Down New Sounds You Should Be Thankful," "Who Told You!" Dynamite's imagination runs wild with three characters for the price of one in Marvelous. His different characters are so convincing that if Dynamite did some voiceover work he'd clear up.

"I wanted to do three different voices but its one person, Marvelous is a sneaky one, a lot of people have trouble with it, a lot of people don't know. Some people work it out some people don't know. A lot of people are like 'what the fuck are you doing letting them people open your album!' Did you enjoy playing different voices? "I love it man, I wish I had 3 different deals, I'd be well off," he jests. "I like that man, I'm in to doing different voices, and different accents, I never want to be get bored, I never want people to get bored of my style.

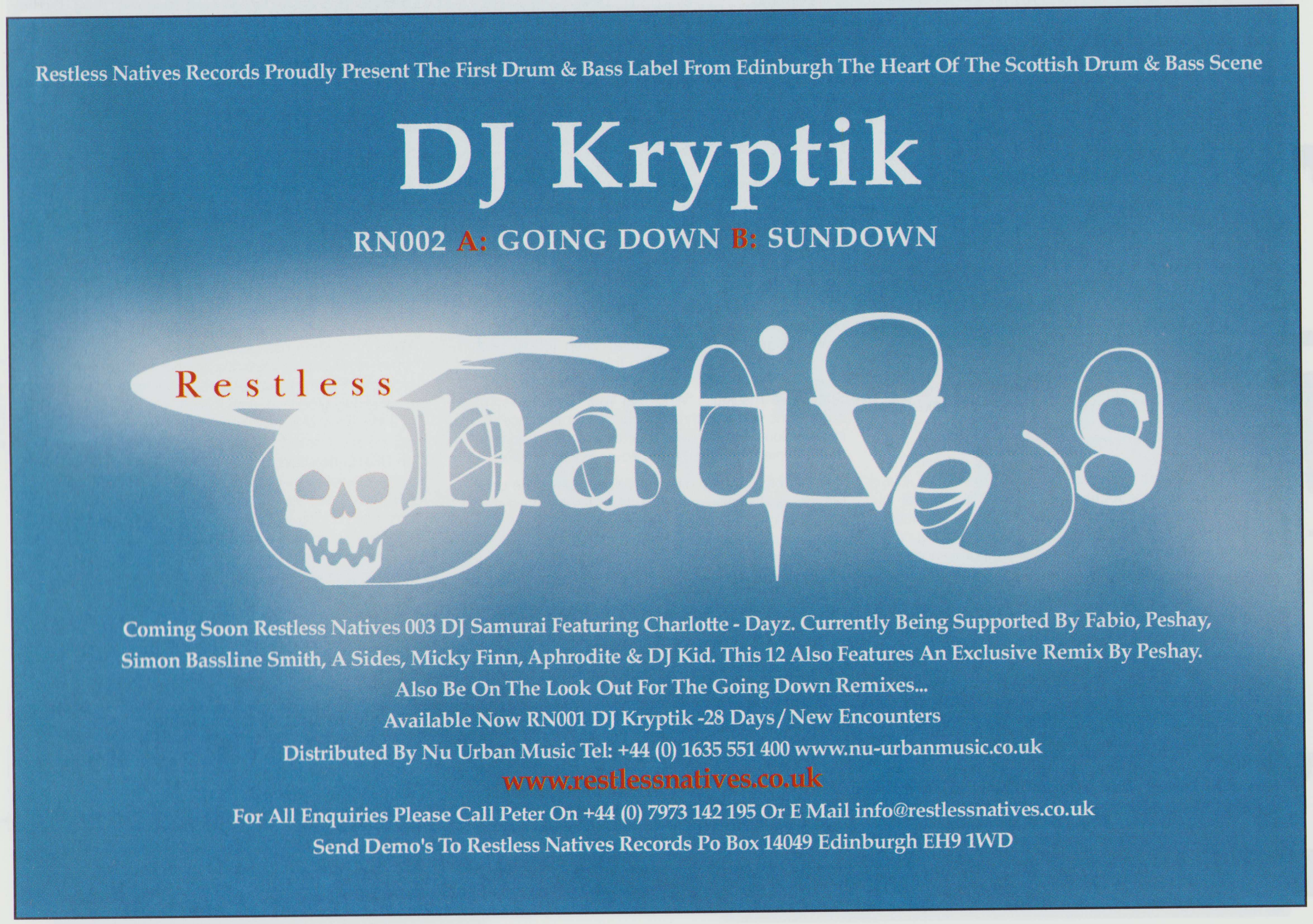
The albums defining moment comes in the shape of 'Visions'. Not only does Dynamite put his inspired pen to work on the lyrics he's also made the beats! 'Visions' is the most memorable track, stirring the soul with its warmth and awareness. Its underpinned by a beautiful old soul sample from Gloria Jones found by Dynamite going back to his roots by "diggin' in the crates." The tune shifts from an ideal world to the stark existence of everyday life and back again. "I originally called it 'Eyes Closed', Its just a look in at society looking at the harsh reality's that surround us and then closing my eyes and imagining if there wasn't any illness that couldn't be cured, if there wasn't prostitution or if everyone could drink from the sea. It's a conscious dream I'm looking how it could be and how it really is, not saying that's it's all bad, there's a lot of good. But there's a lot of bad."

Witnessing Dynamite on stage or in a club is like watching a hyperactive blur of energy. He's been on the frontlines for over a decade and he's included a track on the LP that will ring true with any fellow MCs. 'Rush The DJ' is a comedy track shining a light on the wannabe MCs who want to get on the MIC at every opportunity. "It's a true experience that every MC should be able to relate to, he explains. "You go on the MIC and people come up to you and want a go to. There's nothing wrong with that, as an MC it's hard to get a break but you know some people are really disrespectful and act like you're insulting them and the world owes them a favour and they're the greatest thing ever. I just wanted to flip it, no-one bothers the DJ and turns up with two records under their arm and says 'Grooverider let me just spin these 2 tunes real quick no-one will mind.' It just doesn't happen, its unheard of, I've written loads of funny tunes but that's the one that made the LP."

If you see him in the club after he's done his set, you're more likely to look around and see D getting down on the dancefloor than chilling in the VIP area. Whether he's busting moves, topping up his crew's glasses with his favourite tipple Hennessy or blazing some chronic, Dynamite brings the party. "Yeah mate!" he says excitedly. "Its important, you have to remember what it's like to be a punter. No disrespect intended when I say that. When you're behind the decks all the time you need to know what it's like to be in front of the decks to see the DJ and an MC and see them working it. I'm in the crowd more time man, that's the party!"

For a man who's been around the world and back many times, experiencing a hell of a lot on the way its remarkable how much love and enthusiasm he still has for the game. "I try and stay grounded, 'cos there's a lot of people who are in a lot worse situations than I am and its very easy to start griping about stupid little things. Look at the bigger picture and you understand I'm in a very fortunate position, I try to stay blessed. Draw inspiration from your family, happiness, from love from tears from Hennessy, from parties, from going around the world and seeing different attitudes and mindsets in different countries. Just reading, learning, watching movies and just taking it all up and seeing what you can give to the game." Because at the end of it all, "If you ever stop learning, you've learned nothing at all."

Talking with Dynamite you get the sense that he doesn't stop to congratulate himself instead he's constantly thinking about what direction he can move in next. "I never look through those kind of eyes thinking 'wow I'm doing great. I think 'fuck why haven't I done that or I need to do this.' There's always something to strive for." He's already looking to the future. "We've the next album started and I'm thinking of shooting a video for 'Visions'. When we did 'Ride' I called everybody man, so a lot of soldiers came down to show love, Ron, GQ, Fearless came down. I like to keep it family man, If I blow we all blow."



world scenes: scotland

It is undeniable that the Scottish d&b scene is at the healthiest it has ever been. Synonymous with drum and bass north of the border, the mighty monster that is Manga is rolling towards nine years at the forefront of drum and bass in Scotland, making it one of the world's longest running d&b nights. Hot on their heels, Aberdeen's Jungle Nation celebrated seven years in the business back in February. Glasgow now boasts a number of nights in addition to four-year-old liveVevil, the most notable of these being Manga's new monthly residency, as well as nights such as Release and Bomba Fusion. In addition, new nights are cropping up in smaller towns the length and breadth of the country. As a result of more and more Scottish punters tuning in and locking on to the d&b sound, new nights are managing to stay on their feet alongside their more established counterparts. New DJ talent coming through has ample opportunity to express themselves thanks to nights like Obscene, Split, edinburgh:bassed, and Affiliate in Edinburgh; Urizen and Hi-Tension in Glasgow; Optimum in Aberdeen and nights such as Red Alert and Alphabreaks in Dumfries and Dumfermline respectively. In addition to the club nights, forum-based portal ScottishDrumandBass.com, in operation since July 2002, has allowed DJs, producers and heads to come together online, further enhancing the already strong sense of community within the Scottish scene. All this signifies that d&b has not only firmly touched down, but is set to stay in Scotland.

With a club scene that is established and growing all the time, home to DJs such as DJ Kid, G-Mac, Tez, Paul Reset, ENO, DJ Kryptik, The General, Tania Swift, and a wealth of up and coming talent, the next step towards stamping the country firmly on the global d&b map is to move up onto the next rung on the ladder – production. Similarly to the club scene, the production hotspots lie predominantly in the two largest cities – Glasgow and Edinburgh – but as the scene matures and the network of committed d&b heads develops, more and more talent is emerging from the woodwork.

Glasgow is home to the most established of the Scottish labels, namely liveVevil resident Paul Reset's Nerve Productions. Nerve, with its first release back in October 2001, currently has its fourteenth release in the shops and Nerve 16 due out later this summer. Paul has himself had releases on labels including Underfire, TOV, Industry and Flex. Also from the liveVevil camp, producer Morphy has been building a reputation on the Scottish scene and is certainly one to watch in 2004. Morphy has previous releases on Urban Takeover, and has a double A-side just released on Direct Recordings. Despite a recent quiet spell, Kemal's label, Cryptic Audio, has its fourth release ("Glimpse" b/w "Afterglow") in shops now, and Kemal plans to increase the label's output in the future.

Moving across to Edinburgh, the last couple of years have seen things begin to pick up production wise. Strictly bootleg label Highland Hustlers enjoyed success with its first release, 'Scam 1,' a Blu Cantrell / Missy Elliot affair, and the follow up, 'Scam 2,' which features a Sean Paul remix, is currently in shops where it's first press run of 1000 copies came close to selling out in just three weeks. On the more legitimate side of things, early 2004 saw the first release on new label Restless Natives Records, DJ Kryptik's '28 days' b/w 'New Encounters.' The label is set to act as a platform for undiscovered up and coming artists from Scotland and beyond. The second release, 'Going Down' b/w 'Sundown,' again by DJ Kryptik, was given major support from the likes of Grooverider, DJ SS, Bryan G, and Simon Bassline Smith, amongst others, and has already been remixed by Midlands-based Devize. Currently doing the rounds on promo, the third release on RNR looks set to reaffirm Manga resident and label boss DJ Kid's ethos for releasing quality material from up and coming producers. The third release on Restless Natives Recordings features Edinburgh-based DJ Samurai ft Charlotte, and is entitled 'Days.' Not only has this received plays from many top-flight DJs, it has already been given the remix treatment by the one and only Peshay, which will feature on the flip. Kid himself has also been working in the studio, and plans to launch his own label, Invade Recordings, once he feels the time is right.

Other up and coming talent comes in the form of Codenine, two brothers from Edinburgh who have been busy locked in their studio, occasionally surfacing to witness the effects of their dubs on the Manga crowd.

Production output from within the Scottish scene is not only limited to the prospects for the future, and to say that Scotland is new to the production game would be far from correct. Prime exporters from the past come in the form of Kemal and Rob Data, who have appeared on labels including Moving Shadow, Underfire and Industry, and whose 'Messiah' (under the guise 'Konflict') charted in the Drum and Bass Arena top twenty tunes of all time. Glasgow's Future Engineers have had releases on Good Looking, 720 Degrees and Partisan, and KMC is another with releases on Timeless, 720 Degrees and Partisan, not to mention several appearances on Good Looking compilations.

So, what can be done to help facilitate Scotland's recognition on the global drum and bass scene? DJ Kid is working on a new concept called The Scottish Drum And Bass Organisation, which is due to launch in 2005. The aim here will be to help as many new faces into the industry as possible, putting productions from talented unknowns directly into the hands of the top DJs in order to get some much needed feedback and ultimately some material getting signed. The organisation would also look to assist anyone wishing to start up a label with help and advice on the many formalities involved.

Key event organiser Jungle Majik is opening its doors to up and coming producers and giving them the opportunity to hear their work over a full size sound system before the club opens. This is a very important part of the learning process and is key to producing tunes that do the business where it matters. However, up until now, only a very select few have been afforded such luxuries as part of their production process. In addition, changes in technology, or more precisely, the advent of the vastly more accessible 'cd dubplate' make such testing a reality to those for whom it simply wasn't a valid option in the past.

Smaller nights can also play their part in this process. Newcomer edinburgh:bassed is a club night aimed expressively at highlighting local talent, as its name suggests. With the benefit of having Final Scratch and cd players at its disposal, and without the pressure of having to run high profile events which the more established clubs have, the opportunity is there for local producers to not only test their work over a club system, but have their tune dropped in a set being played to an audience. Similarly, nights such as Obscene, which has proven itself as a contender whilst sticking in the main to local and unknown artists, will continue to nurture genuinely talented local artists who may otherwise have struggled to gain an experience of playing out.

The Scottish Drum and Bass portal has been a very positive thing for the community as a whole, and although it has already built many bridges within the Scottish scene, without a doubt the potential is there for it to become a central point for the exchange of ideas and information and also act as a hotbed for collaborative efforts.

On a broader scale, smaller FM Radio stations, such as Fresh Air and SubCity, and Internet radio stations, such as Dilated Radio, Interface and Radio Magnetic, are beginning to run shows that feature a great deal of locally produced tunes by undiscovered artists, and thankfully, corporate station Beat 106 has recently appointed a new programme controller, who, unlike her predecessor, has worked with the likes of Fabio and Grooverider and recognises the importance of representing, amongst other things, drum and bass. DJ Kid and Tania Swift used to run a weekly drum and bass show, which was canned when Capital took over the station a few years back. Although the restrictions connected with corporate radio will no doubt still be apparent, it is a great relief and hopefully a step towards the return of broader scale representation for the daddy of all the dance music genres.

<WEB LINKS>
www.restlessnatives.co.uk
www.basstrap.com
www.djkid.co.uk
www.nerveproductions.co.uk
www.scottishdrumandbass.com
www.alphabreaks.com
www.obscenebass.co.uk
www.edinburghbassed.com
www.radiomagnetic.com

diggin in the crates: ratpack

Planet Rock. Afrika Bambatta

This is the one that kick started it all for me. I was about 12/13 yrs old, I heard this track on a pirate radio station in London and was hooked on the whole Electro thing. That fat drum beat and the main synthesizer will stay with me for the rest of my life. I used to walk along the street with my ghetto blaster, rinsing it out and thinking I was cool as Fcuk, how sad I hear you say... maybe you should've seen me try to body pop to it, then you'll know about sad..

Just having Fun - Dougie Fresh

This track is always special to me because it started my whole carreer in a way. Before I became a DJ, I used to be a human beat box and it was Dougie Fresh who got me hooked on it. When I first listened to this tune, I couldn't believe he was making the drum beats with his mouth, but my old mate Sipho, from school, could beat box too, and this gave me the confidence to try it myself. I finally got my demos played on LWR by Tim Westwood again thanks to Sipho who already had his demos played everywhere. I soon met Evenson Allen, who was a DJ and wanted me to beatbox in his set. Not long after that, we formed The Ratpack and I kept my beatbox name "Lipmaster" It's easy for me to wonder, had I not heard that Dougie Fresh track what would I be doing now? Hmmmm... I hear the word "Toilets"

Can you Feel It? Mr Fingers

For me, this is the house tune that started it all for me. I heard it on the radio in 1986, and still to this day it gives me goose pimples. It's a tune you can rock to, and also a tune you can daydream to. As I was a massive fan on Electro and Hip-Hop, I wouldn't listen to anything else, until "Can you Feel It" came along and made me share my life with house music too. Not long after that Acid House was born, and I was hooked on that too, and ultimately, that kicked of my DJ career. I love this tune.

Jaffa Cakes - Ratpack

I have to give this a mention, even though it makes me cringe to look back at this track. It holds a special place, as it was our first ever recording. Seeing our names on a piece of vinyl for the first time, was the bollocks. I'll never forget it. I suppose it's a bit like your first time having sex, you can remember everything, who, where, when, good bits, bad bits, what you got from it, bits that make you cringe, bits that make you laugh, but it's always a good milestone to show (to yourself) how much you've improved over the years... in (Musical) production of course.

Missin you - Everything but the Girl

Basicaly, I have used this track at the funerals of at least three of my family members, so naturally, when I hear this track, it stops me in mine. Nuff Said.

weekly nights

>minimelt
Freq: Every Tues. Venue: Ocean Rooms, Brighton. Time: 10-2am. Cost: £3. Music Policy: D&B. Info: 01273 688886. DJs: Ed Solo, JFB, Drift, MC's Jeopardy, TC Izlam (NYC), Darrison, Det, JT, Junior Red. Various weekly guests.

>swerve
Freq: Every Wed. Venue: The Lounge Bar, The End, West Central St, London, WC2. Time: 10-3am. Cost: £6. Music Policy: D&B. Info: 020 7471 4777. DJs: inc Fabio, XRS, Marky, Addiction, Bryan Gee, Flight, Bailey, Storm, Total Science, Patife, Fabio.

>therapy session
Freq: 3rd Wed of month. Venue: Herbal, Kingsland Rd, Shoreditch, London, E2. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B, Hip Hop. Cost: £5. Info: venue. DJs: 21/07 - Bailey, Keaton, Red One, Wildchild & Robyn Chaos, Khanage, MC 2Shy, Strlin, Manikular. The Bomb Squad, Ayah. 18/08 - Dylan & Tech Itch, Bad Company & Loxy, DJ Ink & B-Key, Kryptic Minds & Leon Switch, Robyn Chaos & Nexxi. The Bomb Squad, Ayah

>new nation
Freq: Every Thurs. Venue: Station, Chertsey Road, Woking, Surrey. Time: 8-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £5. Info: 07956 644415. DJs: Various weekly guests plus New Nation regulars.

>ambush
Freq: Every Thurs. Venue: Watershed club, Wimbledon. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £5. Info: venue. DJ's: 17/06 - Storm. 24/06 - Slipmatt, Ratpack. Plus Frequency, Upakut & Relm.

>soul:ution (london)
Freq: Quarterly Thurs. Venue: Plastic People, Curtain Rd, Shoreditch, London, E2. Time: 9-3am. Cost: £5. Music Policy: DnB. Info: info@soulr.co.uk. DJs: 22/07 - Marcus Intalex, High Contrast, MC DRS.

>movement
Freq: Every Thursday. Venue: Bar Rumba, 36 Shaftesbury Ave, London, WC1. Time: 8.30-3am. Cost: £6. Music Policy: D&B, Beatz. Info: 0207 377 9494. DJs: Bryan Gee, Ray Keith, Marky, Patife, Ruffstuff, Addiction, Darrison, IC3, Moose, Stamina MC. 24/06 - Shy FX, MJ Mac. 01/07 - Friction, Clipz, DJ Mosus. 08/07 - Nicky Blackmarket, The Furious & DJ Cachet. 15/07 - Swift, Fatboy. 22/07 - Goldie, Gerard, Amo. 29/07 - Andy C, Stealth.

fridays

>basstrap sessions
Freq: Every Friday. Venue: Bambu, South Bridge, Edinburgh, Scotland. Time: 9-1am. Cost: £0. Info: 07887 676061. Music: D&B/Breaks. DJs: G Mac & guests.

>cocoshebeen
Freq: Every Fri. Venue: Opera House, Bournemouth. Time: 9-3am Cost: £9. Info: 0870 830 1414. Music Policy D&B / Trance. DJs: 09/07 - Hype & MC Sky. 16/07 - Andy C. 23/07 - Zinc.

>manga: edinburgh
Freq: 3rd Fri of month. Venue: The Honeycomb, Niddry St, Edinburgh. Time: 11-3am. Music Policy: D&B / Breaks. Cost: £7. Info: 0788 767 6061 / basstrap.com. DJs: 09/07 - Residents and guest TBC.

>bounce
Freq: 2nd Fri of month. Venue: Waterfront, Norwich. Cost: £12. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 09/07 - Charge/Valve: Dillinja, Lemon D, Swift, Blame, EZ Rollers, Fierce, IC3, Jakes. 13/08 - Calibre, Zinc, EZ Rollers, Stamina, Lowqui, Tech Itch, Dylan, Jakes.

>soul:ution
Freq: 3rd Fri of Month. Venue: Band on the Wall, Swan Street, Manchester. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: Soulful D&B. Cost: £6. Info: soulr.co.uk. DJs: 16/07 - Marcus Intalex, Catalyst, MD, MC DRS.

>decode
Freq: 2nd Fri of Month. Venue: Aura, 2 Church Sq, Taunton. Time: 8-3am. Music Policy: D&B / Breaks. Cost: £10. Info: info@clubaura.co.uk. DJ's: 09/07 - Roni Size, MC Wrec, Deep, Mr Nice, Talon, Parker, MC Manic. 13/08 - RAM Raiders: Andy C, Red One, Deep, Mr Nice, MC Fatman D, Shortston, Manic, Wrec.

>meltdown
Freq: 3rd Fri of month. Venue: Beach Club, Brighton Sea Front. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £8.50. Info: 01273 608886. DJ's: 16/07 - Shy FX and more. 20/08 - Virus: Ed Rush, Optical, Friction. Plus JFB Darrison, Ed Solo, Quantum.

>technique pres interface
Freq: First Fri of Month. Venue: The Gatehouse, Friargate, City Centre, Derby. Time: 10-4am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £7. Info: 07903 50 22 22. DJs: Various guests monthly.

>rukus
Date: Monthly Fri. Venue: Thekla, Mud Dock, Bristol. Time: 10-4am. Cost: £8. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: 09/07 - Andy C, Poison. 20/08 - Twisted Individual, Poison, Decoy.

>drive by: raising the level
Freq: First Fri of Month. Venue: Level, 24 Park Row, Bristol. Time: 10-late. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £7. Info: 07976 210767. DJ's: 02/07 - Grooverider, Bailey, Gerard, Amo, MC Sweet Pea. Plus MC Retna, Money & The Tech.

>metropolis
Freq: First & Last Fri of Month. Venue: Phoenix, Oxford Road, M'cr. Time: 10-4am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £5. Info: 07770 601 731. DJs: 02/07 - Nicky Blackmarket, Frenzic, Mark OD, Prophecy, MC Tonn Piper, Deval, Suddz. 06/08 - Resident's Special. 27/08 - Guests TBC. 03/09 - Guests TBC. 24/09 (10-6am, £10) - Andy C + more TBC, Prophecy, Mark OD, MC Tonn Piper, Deval, Suddz. 01/10 (10-6am, £10) - Hype, Friction, Bailey, Hazard, Mark OD, Prophecy, MC Tonn Piper, Deval, Suddz.

>bassix
Freq: First Fri of Month. Venue: Enigma, Regent St, Cheltenham. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £8. Info: bassixdnb@hotmail.com. DJ's: 02/07 - Bassline Smith, Drumsound, MC Fearless, Poison, Kontagious, Access, MC Dread, MC Lady Blaze, MC Stanza.

>momentum
Freq: Last Fri of month. Venue: Think Tank, Call lane, Leeds. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: Soulful D&B. Cost: £4. Info: momentumu@yahoo.com. DJs: 28/06 - Simon Bassline Smith, TC1, 3rd Generation, Digital, Subvert.

>hospitality
Freq: 3rd Fri of month. Venue: Herbal, Kingsland Rd, Shoreditch, London, E2. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B / Beats. Cost: £6. Info: hospital-records.com. DJs: 16/07 - Bryan Gee, Nu:Tone, Commix, Logistix, SP:MC, Chris Goss, Landslide.

>source
Freq: 3rd Fri of Month. Venue: The Zodiac, Cowley Rd, Oxford. Time: 10.30-4am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £7. Info: 01865 420042. DJ's: 16/07 - DJ Lee, DJ Kiat. 13/08 - Residents.

>detonate
Freq: last Fri of month. Venue: Stealth, Goldsmith St, Nottingham. Time: 10-3.30am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £10. Info: 07957 545317. DJs: 25/06 - Andy C, Red One, Transit Mafia, Creation, MC Foxy, MC E-LL. The Nextmen, Santero. 23/07 - DJ SS, Bassline Smith, Twisted Individual, MC Biggie, MC E-LL. Kashmere, Ghost, Verb T, Santero. 27/08 - Zinc, Frenzic, MC AD, MC E-LL.

>fabric live
Freq: Every Friday. Venue: 77a Charterhouse Street, London EC1. Time: 9.30-5am. Cost: £12. Info: fabriclondon.com. Music Policy: D&B / Breaks. DJs: 25/06 - True Playaz: Hype, Zinc, Pascal, Andy C, Brockie, Ruff Stuff, MC Dynamite, GQ, Fats, AD. Scratch Perverts, Mixologists, Krafty Kuts. Mark B & Tommy Evans, Mr Thing, Dekker. 02/07 - Killa Kela, Spinbad, Scratch Perverts, Diplo, Semtex, J33, Joe Ransom. Mic Fight: Kano, Demon & Taz, Mystro. Roni Size, Grooverider, Fabio, Peshay, TK, MC Dynamite, Moose & 2Shy. Ali B. 09/07 - Peter Kruder, Beanfield, James Lavelle, Michael Reinboth. Andy C, DJ Hype, Zinc, High Contrast, MC GQ, Elksman & SP:MC. The Herbaliser, Fila Brazilia, Joe Ransom & MC Trip. 16/07 - Plump DJs, Stanton Warriors, Freestylers, Soul Of Man, A Skillz. Breakbeat Kaos: Craze (D&B), Adam F, DJ Fresh, Pendulum, Future Prophecies, MC Armanni. Craze (hip hop), DJ Vadim, Joe Ransom. 23/07 - FreQ Nasty, Colder (live), Dark Globe. Krust, Grooverider, Die, Simon Bassline Smith, Maximus. DJ Yoda & Dan Greenpeace, Krust & DJ Die (hip hop), Skitz & Rodney P, Devon Miles. 30/07 - True Playaz: DJ Hype, Zinc, Pascal, Grooverider, Mampi Swift, Hazard, MC GQ, Fats, Rage & AD. Hybrid, Meat Katie, Tayo, General Midi. Ali B, Joe Ransom & MC Trip. 06/08 - Adam Freeland, UNKLE. D&B Arena: Fabio, Zinc, Randall, Hype, Clipz, Transit Mafia, Keaton, MC Elksman & Freestyle. Aim, Ali B. 13/08 - Plump DJs, Rennie Pilgrem, Stanton Warriors, The Freestylers, Tayo, Ali B. Hybrid, Meat Katie vs Lee Coombs, Soul Of Man, Koma & Bones, Splitloop. Krafty Kuts, Blim, Evil Nine, Deekline, Joe Ransom. 20/08 - James Lavelle, Scratch Perverts. Prototype: Grooverider, Andy C. Joe Ransom. 27/08 - True Playaz Special: DJ Hype, Zinc, Pascal.

>bassix
Freq: First Fri of Month. Venue: Enigma, Regent Street, Cheltenham. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £8. Info: 07786 920592. DJs: 02/07 - Technique: Bassline Smith, Drumsound, MC Fearless, Poison, Access, Kontagious, MC Dread, MC Lady Blaze, MC Stanza. 06/08 - Twisted Individual, MC Shabba, Poison, Access, Kontagious, Filter, MC Dread, MC Lady Blaze, MC Stanza.

saturdays

>kinetic
First Sat of month. Venue: The Coven II, Oxpens rd, Oxford. Time: 10-4am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £8. Info: 07930 531223. DJs: 03/07 - Kenny Ken, Mickey Finn, Foxy and Fatman D. Plus Mikee Hussla, Juicy, Melodize, DJ Bright, Dan Fraser.

>refuge
Freq: Every Sat. Venue: Metropolitan, Eden Quay, Dublin 2. Time: 9-2am. Cost: 7E. Music Policy: DnB. Info: info@bassbin.com. DJs: 19/06 - Don Rosco, Fracture, Neptune. 26/06 - Rohan, Ricky Force. 03/07 - Calibre, Safetyboy. 17/07 - Zero Tolerance, Don Rosco. 24/07 - Seba, Naptha. 31/07 - Rohan, Code.

>drive by vs infidelity
Freq: 2nd Sat of Month. Venue: Babylon, Kingston Road, Bath. Time: 10-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £4. Info: 07976 210767. DJ's: 10/07 - Shy FX. 14/08 - Andy C. Plus Gerard, Jeckal, MC Blaze, MC Risky.

>devotion
Freq: Last Sat of month. Venue: The Concorde 2, Madeira Dr, Brighton. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £10. Info: 07815 714920. DJs: 26/06 - Andy C, Ray Keith, Hazard, Phantasy, UK Apache + more. 24/07 - Pendulum, Bryan Gee, BC + more.

>accelerated culture
Freq: Last Sat of month. Venue: Air (formerly Code), Heathmill Lane, Digbeth, Birmingham. Time: 10-5am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £15. Info: 0870 7544445 / acceleratedculture.com. DJs: 26/06 - Andy C, Hype, Brockie, Moving Fusion, Krust, Friction, Shimon, Red One, Garry K, Skibadee, Eksman, Navigator, Biggie, Juiceman.

sundays

>no frills
Freq: Every Sun. Venue: Hackney Central, (former BR Station), Amhurst Rd, Hackney, London, E8. Time: 8-12am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £6. Info: 07985 300 121. DJs: Weekly guests inc Ron, Brockie, Randall, Bryan Gee and many more.

>grace
Freq: Every Sunday. Venue: Herbal, Kingsland Rd, Shoreditch, London, E2. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B / Breaks. Cost: £5. Info: venue. DJs: Weekly guests include Grooverider, Fabio, Friction and many more.

>intrigue
Freq: Every Sun. Venue: The Soda Bar, Frogmore Street, Bristol. Time: 8-late. Music Policy: Soulful D&B. Cost: £0. Info: 07773 195 949. DJs: The Insiders plus guests.

one offs

>the breakdown
Date: Fri 18th June. Venue: 2, Small Street, Bristol. Time: 9pm-late. Cost: £4. Music Policy: DnB. DJs: Beavis, Hazie P, J Swift, Frequency, Flava, El Jimbo, MP3.

>revolution
Date: Fri 18th June. Venue: Reading Uni Student Union, Whiteknights, Reading. Time: 8-2am. Cost: £13 Music Policy: D&B. Info: 07787 176587. DJs: Valve: Dillinja & Lemon D, Mampi Swift, Clipz, Blaze, Dark A, Pressure, MC Tali, Foxy, Eksman, Moose, Flyte, Yardee, Fleximus.

>basscamp
Date: Fri 18th June. Venue: Lost Weekend, Huntingdon St, N'ham. Time: 10-4am. Cost: £6. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Wickaman, MC Spyda, Bomma.

>drive by: mc foxy b'day
Date: Sat 19th June. Venue: Carling Academy, Frogmore St, Bristol. Time: 10-4am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £12. Info: 07976 210767. MCs: Foxy, Eksman, Fatman D, Herbzie, Shortston, The Ragga Twins, Dynamite MC. DJ Andy C, Friction, Mampi Swift, Bad Company, Gerard, Amo. Money & The Tech, Siesta.

>chatterbox
Date: Mon 21st June. Venue: Escape, Brighton. Time: 8-2am. Cost: £4. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Swift, Pendulum, Filthy Dirty Rich, Bengal, Devastate.

>darklight
Date: Tues 22nd June. Venue: Ocean Rooms, Morley St, Brighton. Time: 10-2am. Cost: £3. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Bad Company, MC Eksman, Hasty, Zest, Niterider, Neo.

>kemistry rememberance
Date: Tues 22nd June. Venue: Herbal, Kingsland Road, London. Time: 8-2am. Cost: £5. Music Policy: DnB DJs: Ink, Loxy, Clarky, Flight, Marley Marl, Bryan Gee, DJ Krust, DJ Die, Roni Size, Ray Keith, Jumpin' Jack Frost, Bailey, J Majik, Digital, Randall, Goldie, Doc Scott, Storm, Fabio & Grooverider MCs Dynamite, Verse, Moose and Cleveland Watkiss.

>step one
Date: Fri 25th June. Venue: Level, Park Row, Bristol. Time: 9-3am. Cost: £5. Music Policy: D&B, Hip Hop, House. DJs: J Majik, Total Science, Poison, Fluid, Fatman D.

>backdrop
Date: Thurs 25th June. Venue: Plan B, Brixton Rd, London. Time: 8-3am. Cost: £5. Music Policy: Breaks, D&B. DJs: Fabio, Vantage, Beckett, Mim, Jo.

>rollercoaster II
Date: Sat 26th June. Venue: Mass, St Matthews Church, Brixton. Time: 9-6am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £10. Info: venue. DJ's: Ray Keith, Aphrodite, Brockie, Darren Jay, John B, Twisted Individual, Ruffstuff, Dope Ammo, Navigator, Shabba D, Fun. DJ IQ, Disorda, DJ Blakey, Doc Brown, Dough, Porge1, Skinnyman.

>obztin8
Date: Sat 26th June. Venue: The Venue, Lakes Rd, Braintree, Essex. Time: 8-2am. Cost: £10. Music Policy: Old Skool/Hardcore. DJs: SY, Sainty, Gary D, Switch, FX and more.

>the mastermind records
Date: Tues 29th June. Venue: Volks Club, Madeira Dr, Brighton. Time: 9-2am. Cost: £5. Music Policy: D&B & Hip Hop. DJs: Fluid, Flyte, Kraft, Diablo, Skandal.

>pure science
Date: Thurs 1st July. Venue: The Loft, Gabriels Hill, Maidstone. Time: 9-2am. Cost: £6. Music Policy: D&B. Info: 07788 448756. DJs: Nicky Blk Mkt, Ruffstuff, Flex, Sheerdrop, Process, Blunt, Tone, MC Fearless, Fun, Decoy, R-Vee, Creeper.

>best of british
Date: Fri 2nd July. Venue: SEOne, Weston St, London, SE1. Time: 10-7am. Music Policy: D&B/Breaks/Hip

True Playaz @ Fabric - Fri 28th May. London

Once again its the last weekend of the month and time for another instalment of True Playaz at London's super club, Fabric. The only time of the month when DnB takes over the main room, this is guaranteed to be a very busy night. Both regulars down at Fabric, myself and Majistrate hit the road knowing there's going to be a lot of good music in store tonight, and that's its going to be fun but no doubt it will get messy!

We arrive around 11ish, the guest list queue is refreshingly small, anybody smart enough to have pre-order tickets, walks straight in. The paying queue stretches out of sight, but as there's no search on entry (unless your singled out) the security do get the people in fast. Luckily we're on the guest list so were waiting outside no longer than 5 minutes. Anytime we've arrived after midnight its been one in one out.

We enter the main room to the sound of Fabric's booming system. Though maybe not as loud as the second 'darker' room, the clarity and bass of the main rooms system is only rivalled by other London club The End. Following Hazard, Pascal starts off by sticking to the typical True Playaz sound, the dancefloors very busy and within the first 30 minutes we hear two of our forthcoming tracks 'Panic Attack' and 'Badman Ride Thru' (ft Eksman), both receiving a rewind. The later part of the hour long set moving into a deeper, heavier sound, Pascals mixing was tight and as he often plays this time at this event, he knows exactly how to get the crowd rocking ready for the first of tonight's special guests, from V Records...

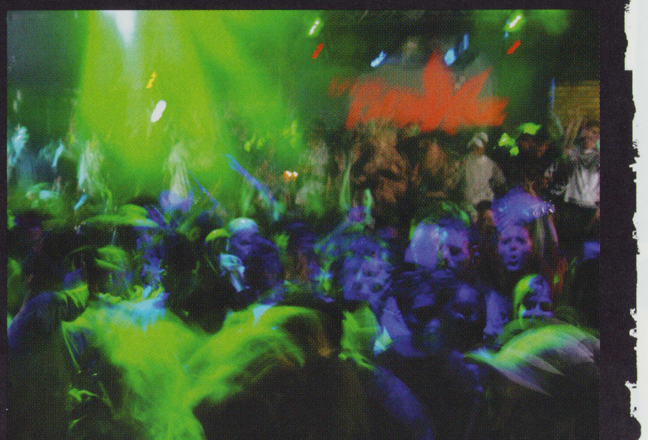
...Bryan Gee, his typical jump up sound, a set full of dubplates, he tore the dancefloor to pieces... tune after tune, big basslines! For me, DJ of the night. Not the most technical mixer out there, but tune selection-wise Bryan Gee was on fire! I didn't recognise many of the tunes in the first half hour but I'm sure they will all gain anthem status in the coming months, one track I did recognise was the 'Foundation rmx'!

Up next DJ Hype, and for 2 hours. Starting off with his collaboration track with J Majik, 'Dub Plate Killer', Hype proceed to showcase much of the forthcoming Ganja album and True playaz releases. A big fan of Dillinja, Hype's timing of selecting to play 'In the Grind' - undeniably one of the tunes of the moment, had the now packed full club screaming in appreciation.

Time for the Executioner, Ram Records chief, Andy C. Often a special guest at True Playaz. and obviously enjoying himself as much as any raver on the dance floor. Double drops and rewinds galore, standard. There's not much to write in the way of compliments that haven't been written before. It was good to hear him drop Shy FXs new track featuring MC 5ive-O, and a few other jump up tracks to keep the True Playaz vibe rolling inside.

Next up, and to finish the night off Zinc, we only managed to stay for his first couple of tunes, but I have no doubt he was up to his usual three deck wizardry.

To sum up, if you haven't been to Fabric before, every Friday drum and bass is in at least one room, but the True Playaz night is that extra bit special, and busier. The club itself cannot really be matched to any other drum and bass venue. The large capacity can only be compared to larger rave type events, but the plush interior, the high quality sound systems and air conditioning are more comparable to smaller clubs like the End. The popularity of Friday nights down at Fabric, and more importantly that the majority of the punters (many tourists) are there to listen to drum and bass highlight the ever growing and maturing drum and bass scene. **DJ Nicol**



Planet V - Sat 12th June - Egg, London

On a week that was said to be the hottest of the year, the sun didn't quite reach round to this Planet, as the V Recordings crew proved right the theory that even the most successful things in life can have an off day as this egg failed to hatch.

Drum & Bass guru Bryan Gee has been responsible for putting on some of the biggest and most legendary parties across all corners of the globe; on stamping grounds such as Canada, Australia, and Brazil and all over Europe. However this was not a night of which to match with any of those parties, those that have made Planet V the institution of the scene it is. After the huge success of the V Recordings other party night Movement at Homelands, Bristol, The End and two Bar Rumba's in the last 3 weeks, surely it was asking too much to expect people to make the journey into London number one red-light district and do it all again.

The secret behind the success of this mammoth party isn't much of secret at all. The reasons why Planet V has been such a success, rests on two main factors. The first being that V have always been able to acquire the major players, to perform under the same roof. Top DJ's such as Jumping Jack Frost, Marky, and of late DJ Ruffstuff and MC's such as Dynamite MC and Moose have been rewinding 12's and rocking the dance as long this music has been at the forefront of the underground scene. As well as groundbreaking producers who have built the foundation for the label to progress on from such as Roni Size, Peshay and Dillinja.

Secondly there has always been an occasion or reason for bringing the scene together for a good old fashion knees up and there just didn't seemed to be one. Having opened Fabric all those many, many moons ago and launching the night at Bagleys as well as all the album launches to boot, there just didn't seemed to be any... well justification for this one.

The beauty of this night was that is wasn't just like any other rave, being put on every other month at the same dusty venue, it was special and unique. Everyone would be wondering when the next Planet V was happening and then BANG all of a sudden, just like a Zidane double it would provoke a feeling of shock we just weren't expecting. Everybody across this music genre knows how V gets down, but although this will definitely not tarnish the reputation of the label, it will be one preferred to be forgotten.

The liquid sound has definitely come to the fore as one of its pioneers stepped into his arena to take his rightful place. Fabio otherwise known as the 'Liquid Funkster' headlined the Liquid V room alongside fellow veteran Marcus Intalex to show the new class of funk how it's done. Although AI and Commix didn't fight on their knees demonstrating why the likes of Bryan Gee, Bukem and Marcus Intalex have been signing their material up by the crate load.

Despite the low turnout, vibes were evident in abundance as all paying ravers refused to have their spirits dampened by the lack of attendees. This is one thing you can never fault these parties for. No matter who's on the line-up, V always seems to have the formula just right. The energy and fun never seems to wane; something a few other raves could well take note of.

The next Planet V at gives us a chance to breathe and recoup in preparation for the album launch in October. This surely will take us back to those parties we know and love. **Jordan Jarrett- Bryan**

where it's at

Hop/Old Skool/Hardcore. Cost: £16.50. Info: 0870 6000 888 / thebestofbritish.uk.com. DJs: Grooverider, J Majik, Ray Keith, Friction, Swift, R-Type, Bassline Smith, Baron, D4orm, GQ, IC3, Skibadee, Fatman D, Dett, Eksman, Ragga Twins, Herbsie and many more.

>ram records

Date: Fri 2nd July. Venue: The End, West Central St, London, WC1. Time: 9.30-6am. Music Policy: D&B / Various. Cost: £13. Info: 0207 419 9199. DJs: Andy C, Shimon, Zinc, DJ Die, Red One, Fierce, Bailey, Moving Fusion, MC GQ, Dynamite MC, Fats, Verse. Bryan Gee (Old Skool), Danny Breaks, Jay Cunning, Neil Mitchell.

>turbulence

Date: Sat 3rd July. Venue: Northcumbria University. Time: 10-3am. Cost: £7.50. Music Policy: D&B info:info@turbulencecrew.co.uk DJs: J Majik, DJ Steppa, Residents.

>breakneck reloaded

Date: Sat 3rd July. Venue: PoNaNa, Guildhall Walk, Portsmouth. Time: 10-2am. Music Policy: Old Skool. Cost: £3. Info: break-neck.com. DJs: SDM, Triple M, Element, M-Code.

>hi tension

Date: Sun 4th July. Venue: Mas Nightclub, Royal Exchange Sq, Glasgow. Time: 11-3.30am. Cost: £7. Info: www.hi-tension.com. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Dr S Gachet, Etheral, MC RST, Hex, Cypher.

>audio revolution

Date: Thurs 8th July. Venue: Club Mango, Broad St Mall, Reading. Time: 9-2am. Cost: £8. Info: 07766 688782. Music Policy: D&B & Hip-Hop. DJs: J Majik, Total Science, Poison & DJ MK, The Lost project.

>valve album launch

Date: Sat 10th July. Venue: Mass, St Matthews Church, Brixton, London. Time: 10-6am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £10. Info: bigbadbass.com. DJs: Dillinja, Grooverider, Friction, Bryan Gee, Randall, MC GQ, SP, Rage, Dynamite.

>progression sessions

Date: Fri 9th July. Venue: The End, West Central St, London, WC1. Time: 11-5am. Cost: £12. Music Policy: DnB / Eclectic. Info: 0207 419 9199. DJs: LTJ Bukem, London Elektricity, Doc Scott, MC Conrad, Deeizm. Atjazz Domu, Mark Pritchard, Warm residents.

>slammin' vinyl

last event at The Sanctuary

Date: Sat 10th July. Venue: Sanctuary, V7 Saxon St, Milton Keynes. Time: 9-7am. Cost: £25. Music Policy: DnB / Hardcore / Old Skool etc. Info: 0208 363 5566. DJs: Andy C & Hype, Hixxy, Zinc, The Ratpack, DJ Sy, Mark EG, Andy Farley. Andy C, Hype, Mampi Swift, Grooverider, Nicky Blk Mkt, Ray Keith, Brockie, Friction, DJ SS, Bailey, Phantasy & Swane, MC Skibadee, Shabba, Fearless, Dynamite, IC3, Eksman, Foxy, Det. Scott Brown, Breeze, Styles & Dougal, Seduction, Sy & Slipmatt, Hixxy, Kevin Energy, Marc Smith, M Zone. MC Storm, Whizzkid, Smiley, Marley, Odyssey, Wottsee. Producer, Clarkee, Billy Bunter, Scorpio, DJ / MC Ribbz, Sass, Druid. Slipmatt, Vibes, Swane, Kenny Ken, Bassline Smith, Ramos, Ellis Dee.

>twister

Date: Wed 14th July. Venue: Lock 17, Middle Yard, Camden Lock, London, NW1. Time: 10-2am. Cost: £6. Music Policy: D&B. Info: 0207 2592637. DJs: Swift, Fearless, The Underwalls, Richie Weaver, MC Insight.

>dirt sounds

Date: Thurs 15th July. Venue: Club Splash, Merrywalks, Stroud. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £5. Info: 07786 920592. DJs: Nicky Blk Mkt, Access, Kontagious, MC Dread, MC Alpha.

>swerve

Date: Fri 16th July. Venue: The End, West Central St, London, WC1. Time: 11-5am. Cost: £12. Music Policy: DnB. Info: 0207 419 9199. DJs: Fabio, Peshay, Total Science, Bryan G, Bailey and more.

>ground zero

Date: Fri 16th July. Venue: Brixton Telegraph, Brixton Hill, London. Time: 9-4am. Cost: £10. Info: jungler-avers.com. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. DJs: Brian Gee, Friction, Funky Flirt, R-Type b2b Fluid, Cillum b2b Damaja, Funktion b2b Sub Zero, Stealthy b2b Mpire. MC's Flyte, Riddla, Trigga, Bassman, Diablo, Eksman, Kraft, Skandal.

>chameleon

Date: Sat 17th July. Venue: Hobsons Choice, Butchers Row, Banbury. Time: 9-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £7.50. Info: venue. DJ's: Nicky Blk Mkt, Sloss, Complex, Four-Q, Disfunktion.

>desire old skool special 2

Date: Sat 17th July. Venue: The Scala, Kings Cross, London, N1. Time: 9-6am. Cost: £16.50. Music Policy: Old Skool Jungle / New D&B. DJs: Bryan Gee, Randall, Ray Keith, Kenny Ken, Phantasy, Probe, Sense, Funky Flirt, MC Fearless, Flux, Rage, IC3, CD, Cobra D. Arena 2: New Nation.

>impact

Date: Sat 24th July. Venue: Mass, St Matthews, Brixton. Time: 9-6am. Cost: £13. Music Policy: D&B/Old School Jungle. DJs: Bryan Gee, Brockie, Mampi Swift, Randall, Nicky Blackmarket, Twisted Individual, Pole-Axe, Focos, MC Riddla, Shabba, IC3, Fearless, 5ive-O, Fun, J-Swif.

>solution

Date: Wed 28th July. Venue: Herbal, Kingsland Road, London. Time: 9-2am. Cost: £6. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Pendulum, Fresh, Dieselboy, Loxy & Ink, MC Messinian & Verse.

>breakneck

Date: Fri 30th July. Venue: The Gaiety Suite, Portsmouth Pier. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: Old Skool. Cost: £10. Info: break-neck.com. DJs: The Ratpack, RJM, Chamberz, SDM, Element, MC Freestyle.

>global gathering 2004

Date: Sat 31st July. Venue: Long Marston Airfield, Stratford Upon Avon. Time: 4pm-7am. Cost: £45. Music Policy: DnB/Varied. Info: www.god-skitchen.com. DJs: Too many DJs to mentioned across many genres. Accelerated Culture host D&B tent with Fabio, Grooverider, Andy C, Dieselboy, Killa Kela, Pendulum, HYpe, Krust, Garry K, Mampi Swift, Zinc, Hazard, Ratpack, Brytan Gee, Dollar, Nicky Blk Mkt, Twisted Indididual, Dynamite MC, GQ, Skibadee, Shabba, Fearless, Presha, Eksman, Juiceman, J Messinian, Det, IC3, Navigator, Spyda, Stamina, Magika, Biggie, Five Alive.

>thinkin' deeper

Date: Sat 31st July. Venue: The Verve Bar, Church St, Peterborough. Time: 8-2am. Music Policy: Soulful D&B. Cost: £6. Info: deeperthinkin@hotmail.com. DJs: Ill Logic & Raf, DJ Creation, Low Note, Jayeye, Maio & G Roller, DJ Stelth, MC Ruthless.

>geared up / barebass.com

Date: Sat 31st July. Venue: Rocket Complex, Holloway, London. Time: 10-6am Cost: £12. Info: 07743 789539. Music Policy: D&B. DJs: Swan E, Friction, Kane, Decoy, Foxy, Trigga, Fun, Herbzie, Bensta & Baker.

>urban knights

Date: Fri 6th Aug. Venue: 3TO, Chapel Rd, Worthing. Time: 9-2am. Cost: £5. Music Policy: DnB/Varied. DJs: Nicky Blk Mkt, Residents.

>addict sessions

Date: Fri 6th Aug. Venue: Thekla, Mud Dock, Bristol. Time: 10-3am. Cost: £8. Music Policy: Hip Hop. Artists: Phi-Life Cypher, Defikew, Lean, Johnston.

>renegade hardware

Date: Fri 6th Aug. Venue: The End, West Central St, London, WC1. Time: 9-6am. Cost: £14. Music Policy: DnB/R&B. DJs: Loxy, Ink, Friction, Keaton, Dylan, Pendulum, Raiden, Universal Proj, Resonant Evil, Rage, SP, 2Shy, Verse, AD. Bombsquad, Cartel, Damage, Steve Clarke.

>progression sessions

Date: Fri 13th Aug. Venue: The End, West Central St, London, WC1. Time: 11-5am. Cost: £12. Music Policy: DnB / Eclectic. Info: 0207 419 9199. DJs: LTJ Bukem and guests, MC Conrad, Deeizm. Mark Rae, The Nextmen.

Homelands - Sat 29th May, Matterley Bowl, Winchester

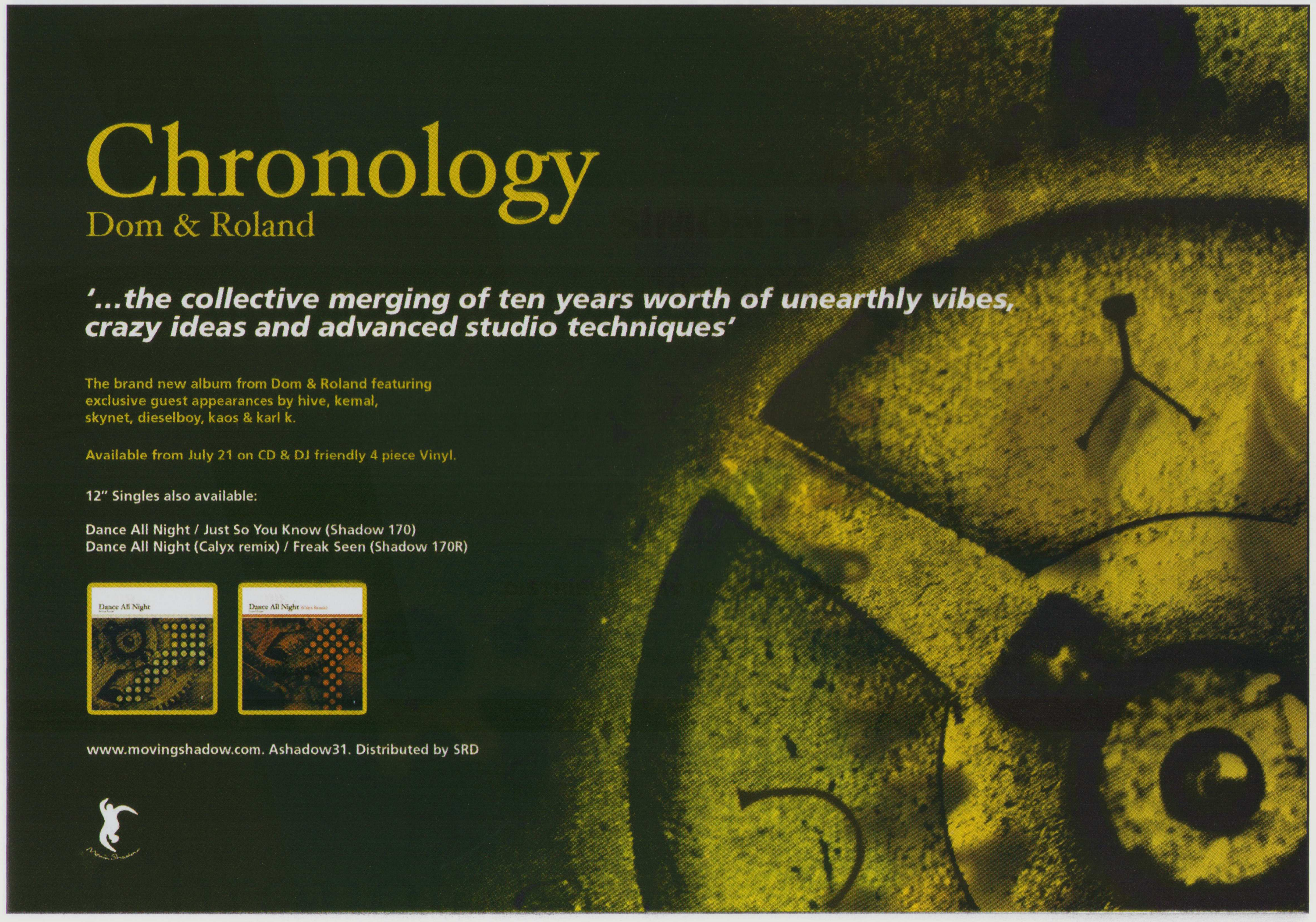
You know it's the start of the summer when Homelands rolls round. This years line-up was as sick as ever, and once again the jungle tent was representing all night long. The weather forecasted rain, but God was on our side cos the bowl stayed dry most of the day and night. Walking in everyone had to pass sniffer dogs which must have got the heart beating for a few! I dunno what Hampshire Constabulary feed their dogs, but I reckon they need to switch to Pedigree Chum!

I got into the Movement tent for the end of Ray Keith and the start of London Elektricity's Live set. One tune in and it was going off, but we left because Killa Kela and his Spitkingdom outfit were firing up in the tent next door. Kela, as usual smashed it, showing why the talented Londoner is getting mad props at the moment. Gotta big up MC Trip as well, who was on top form. There was too many mad acts to see 'em all, but after stocking up on tins of Strongbow and checking out Groove Armada, it was back to the Jungle where Hype and Darrison were holding it down. One thing that was wicked about Homelands is it's location, because unlike other festivals there is no residents near by which means the sound system can be pushed up loud. Next set I caught in there was Fresh who was killing it, dropping 'nuff Breakbeat Kaos dubs, and showing that the forthcoming album is gonna be big.

After chillin' on the grass, hooking up with mates and losing time in a haze, the next act I saw in the DnB tent was Roni's live project. The tent was going off big time, especially when the live version of 'Snapshot' dropped. Props to Sweet Pea who done good, but when man of the moment Dynamite stepped up it went ballistic. There was a few technical difficulties, but apart from that it was a pure Full Cycle onslaught. V top dog was next (I think) and Bryan smashed it, rolling on a dub/jungle vibe, with Foxy, Eksman than Skiba spitting like wildfire.

The highlight of the night was Zinc and Marky doing an impromptu four deck back to back. Scratching, triple drops, dubplate madness… loved it! I heard too many wicked tunes that night, but can't seem to remember any now! Fresh's 'Tomb Raider' got the most plays, closely followed by the mighty 'Odyssey' which looks set to smash floors for a long time. Dillinja's dubplate set killed me, and Andy and Rush kept things tight and heavy till the early hours when I sloped off to nurse a heavy but well content head!

All in all another triumph for the Homelands crew, all tents were going off, especially the massive live tent. Movement did a grand job showcasing a mad array of D&B. I'll see ya next year. **Epik**



PASCAL

words: Laurent Fintoni

As one of the founders of True Playaz, Pascal has always seemed quieter than the rest of the crew. Yet he is one of the originators of the scene with a string of releases to his name across labels, including a number of classics. Originally a Hip Hop DJ, he might not be the name on everyone's tongues right now but he is a DnB soldier through and through, running all the Playaz labels, creating and managing the Playaz site and keeping his DJ schedule busy. He is probably best known as a member of the True Playaz collective to a lot of newcomers to the scene who might not realise the depth and importance of his work since the hardcore days, but this has never stopped him in his tracks, and as this year will show the man has more than a few tricks left up his sleeve.

This June sees the release of his new EP, 'Pascal presents the Playaz Lounge'. This project has been a very long time coming as he explains "it feels like I've been working on it forever. I haven't really had time to dedicate myself to it because of all this other work I have to do and frankly it feels like I've been working on it for too long… The website and all the labels is a heavy workload and the time in the studio suffers because of that." Still he has come through on this EP with yet another fine selection of tracks, reflecting his take on production through the varied styles present on there. "I like to have different styles on my EPs, and this one is no different. There is one groovy tune, one bouncy, aptly titled 'Bounce it', 'Dig Deep' which is an Amen rinse out and then the 'P-Funk' Remix by Moving Fusion." As we speak about his approach to production and his seemingly inescapable want to always follow one track with a totally different one, we touch on the ways in which certain producers in the scene seem to make a name for themselves (or further establish their name) through a personal production formula that guarantees them a runaway success with a string of tracks based on said formula. "Personally I don't think it's a bad thing, because when you follow a formula for your tracks and repeat that for a while, that's when people start paying attention, and talk about you. I guess sometimes it bothers me because I'd like to be able to do that, and get a bit more recognition." So what is it that's stopping him from joining the fray and capitalising on a certain style? "My brain tells me to do it, but my heart wont let me. I'll do one tear out piece and than one mellow without failing!" Still he isn't bitter or angry about it, it just seems he wished he had more time to concentrate on his productions to achieve this. "And also I get Hype on my case all the time because of this. When I did 'Bounce it', he was like 'that's it! You need more of those', but I just can't seem to do it." Even if Pascal is seemingly unable to cash in on the one style there are undoubtedly many producers who have found success with a certain production formula that would exchange it for a pedigree like his.

He will be following the EP with the third volume of the 'True Playaz in the mix' CD series, which once again sees a selection of the most upfront True Playaz cuts to have graced the dancefloor in the last year. Offering the sounds of the Playaz to those who don't necessarily buy vinyl has always been a hallmark of the label, which has been putting out mix CDs for quite a long time. This volume is no different, with the inclusion of a few unreleased tracks including Nightwalker's new 12" which will be out just after the CD.

And when you look at their mix CDs and the vast amount of releases True Playaz and its associated labels have been putting out in the last two years it's hardly surprising to notice that they have entered yet a new phase of their existence with a new generation of producers and DJs ready to continue the good work laid down before them by the founders. With Hype proving himself as one of the sharpest A&R men in the DnB scene, the forward march of the Playaz sound will only continue unabated. "When we started it was just us three, you know? And it was meant to be a way for us to let our stuff out. As time goes on we aren't able to dedicate as much time as we would want to and you have to keep it rolling at the same time. It makes sense to make way for new people and grow the camp. It's all about longevity really; you lay the seeds and let them grow." It's nearly been two years since both Ganja and Frontline were revived, and as Pascal explains the decision to do so was to allow for other platforms to let this new talent grow, giving them time to hone their skills before moving onto the True Playaz label, which they are all keen to make sure only provides the best of the best. Such dedication to the music and its quality is yet again proof that Pascal, Hype and Zinc have been building something which is truly unique within the DnB community and which will continue to rise and expand, supplying the public with exactly what they need.

Another aspect in which the Playaz have led in the scene is their dedication to providing an online platform for their work and collective, and in turn using it to stay in touch with their fans and provide them with news, exclusives and more, cultivating a relationship that is too often overlooked. Pascal has been the instigator of this online expansion, working hard to give people something they can all be proud of. "It's fucking hard work man and it's time consuming too. I do it all myself and I'm already working on the 2005 site. We upgrade every year to make it better really. We need to keep it progressing to keep people interested. We got people involved now with the forum and that's nice, you have similar faces, a little community going. We got Playaz mail now as well as the store so it's all going good."

But it's not stopping there as he reveals that they are putting the finishing touches to something that by all accounts could prove to be a turning point for the DnB community and offer a solution to a problem that is increasingly causing concern amongst labels and producers. "We are working on an mp3 store as well. I'm a computer guy; I like to buy CDs, come home and mp3 them. I like CDs for the case, the booklet and I wouldn't buy an mp3 but there are people out there who will today. The thing that has done it for me was looking at p2p networks and seeing all my stuff on there, my entire back catalogue and you can't fight that, but you can offer people an alternative. With high quality mp3s it can make a difference. If there is no stopping it, then work with it. I just look for the happy medium you know? If it's in place in time then the next Zinc single will be available on mp3 first." The last touches to the mp3 store are being ironed out, mainly the need to find a security solution that will please everybody. Whichever way they decide to go with it, the fact that they are working on such a project and tackling the issue of piracy head on in a way no one has yet decided to do is probably the best thing they can do. Times are changing and whether people like it or not, providing high quality mp3s for a small fee is the best way to counteract what many are seeing as the scene's biggest current problem. And when it's people like True Playaz doing it, you know others will follow, sooner or later.

D-BRIDGE BC

01	break	the race	dub
02	d-bridge & concord dawn	labyrinth	dub
03	chris su	solaris	dub
04	d-bridge	original world	exit
05	spirit	life support (c4c remix)	dub
06	a.i.	uprising	dub
07	calyx	the things u mean 2 me	dub
08	tech itch	soldiers (d-bridge rmx)	dub
09	marcus intalex	zumba	dub
10	commix	don't let me know	cia advanced

FRESH BC

01	pendulum	masochist	breakbeat kaos
02	fresh	living daylights	breakbeat kaos
03	future prophecies	dreadlock	breakbeat kaos
04	calibre	drop It down	dub
05	marcus intalex	zumba	soul:r
06	soul on fire (concord dawn mx)	k.k.j.	human
07	fresh	all that jazz	ram
08	adam f	string dub	breakbeat kaos
09	dillinja	you can't test	breakbeat kaos
10	pendulum	submarines remix	breakbeat kaos

DIESELBOY

01	tech itch	the ruckus (kryptic minds rmx)	dub
02	fresh	colossus	ram
03	pendulum	masochist	breakbeat kaos
04	danny c	star (kryptic minds rmx)	metalheadz
05	keaton	still invisible	dub
06	dylan	false Idols	dub
07	dom & roland	freak scene	dub
08	break	vicious circle	dub
09	d-bridge & concord dawn	labyrinth	dub
10	resonant evil	the mob	dub

DILLINJA

01	dillinja	in the grind	valve
02	clipz	supa ugly	dub
03	hive	krush	dub
04	craggs & parallel forces	fizzy piglets	dub
05	miracle	low down n dirty	dub
06	dj friction	soul surfer	dub
07	adam f & fresh rmx	thugged out bitch	valve
08	afro kid	pharaoh's order	dub
09	dillinja rmx	sunshine	dub
10	dillinja	cunt bag	dub

DYLAN

01	various artists	tech freaks lp	techfreak
02	cartridge	end of the world	freak
03	j majik & wickerman	u disgust me	infrared dub
04	tech itch	the rukus (kryptic & leon rmx)	dub
05	ed rush & optical	gasmask rmx	virus
06	mason	ruff, rugged & raw (tech itch rmx)	freak
07	dylan	false idols	dub
08	cruel intentions	divergence	freak dub
09	hive	krush	headz
10	b-key	unleash	dub

FUTUREBOUND

01	wickerman	mash up	black widow
02	futurebound vs entity	check with the vicar	viper
03	q project	nightmoves (clipz rmx)	cia
04	fresh	submarines (pendulum rmx)	breakbeat kaos
05	futurebound & codek	buckeroo	infrared
06	entity	caterpilla	viper
07	j majik, wickerman, hype	dubplate thrilla	infrared
08	total science	defcon 69	metalheadz
09	f&j	blind cobblers (baron rmx)	viper
10	surge	chess boxing	full cycle

BRYAN GEE

Roni Size ft Jocelyn Brown - Sing - V Recs
Oh my god "dis is some proper soul music". Jocelyn's voice is outa this world and with Roni on the mix you're not disappointed. Proper, proper tings. Coming on the 'Return to V' LP, on V recs baby.

Afro Kid - Ghost weed - V Dubplate
Another Chronic basher, I don't even know where to start. Afro kid keeps it gutters with this mad vocal shouting out "ghost weeeeed"... the breaks are running with much energy, and an infectious bassline for the jump up crew...

JuJu EP - Thunder / Skylarking etc - Liquid V
Coming in strong from San Fran its Juju. Killing me with 4 serious cuts of dub flava, I couldn't pic which tunes to run with for a 12" so I signed the lot, all the tunes are making noise.

Artificial Intelligence - Uprising - V Dubplate
Two massive new tracks from the A.I. This time they are changing the game with the deepest grooves, The b-line in 'Uprising' is a unmistakable it's a sub bass monster, shutting down every sound system it touches, This 12 comes with a serious warning... Be aware.

Blueskin - Feel You Too - Liquid V Dubplate
This tune is just soooo bad. These boys have done some excellent tunes, and Cleveland & Fats take this tune to another level. This a big hit for Liquid V, more high class material we're dealing with. Right. 'Its all about Liquid V'.

Digital - Cheeky Girl / Laters Star - Chronic Dub
What more can I say? Digital is the original dubster, he lives these rhythms. This 12 brings Digital back to Chronic for another heavyweight 12". Respect.

Future Cut - Friends - V Dubplate
I've gotta say, when I got this I was thrilled to hear Future Cut on the grind again. With some male vocals touching on some original flava, and tight breaks, which helps to give of some feel good vibes for the summer.

JOHN B

Hive - Krush - Metalheadz
I don't think this is due out for ages, but it's the most monstrous track I've heard for a loooong time so it HAS to be mentioned. A perfect example of classic Headz Style, an absolute beast - really crunchy beats, lovely musical atmospherics and interesting, technical edits. Reminds me of the era when I used to get really upset when I heard good tunes because I was so jealous of them, good work, and great to hear from a non-UK producer.

Robbie Craig - Experience (John B rmx) - Break
Bit of a plug here... a groovy liquid/soulful vibe with Robbie Craig's on vocals. I've done a 12" and radio mix, as its quite a poppy song, should be really good for the summer Swervey crowd, and I'm glad I've finally done something new that's suitable for Fabio to play! I think the label is aiming to push it commercially, so fingers crossed!

CastOr- Emily - Nu Electro
I've been playing this in absolutely every set for the last 6 months - CastOr, from Arizona smashed it with this one - really heavy, steppy electroclash at DnB tempo, works really well as a bridging track in my sets, its heavy enough to mix with regular DnB, but cheeky and bleepy enough to lead into eLectrO stuff. Definitely a landmark in the electro/drum&Bass crossover territory.

John B / Marcy Meow - Tainted Love - Nu Electro
Just finished this last week – it's a DnB electro cover of the Soft Cell hit from the 80s, goes down fabulously with the American Girls... Marcy Meow is my friend from California, a Hustler Model and Porn star from the "Barely Legal" series! She's done some great vocals on this track and also another 80s cover we're working on "The Metro" which was a hit for the band "Berlin" back in the day.

ill Skillz/Concord Dawn - Watch Me Now - Illskills
These guys linked up a few months ago when Concord dawn (from NZ) were touring in Europe. A shining example of the Trance & Bass style - top notch production, interesting and different musical elements, in this case heavy metal electric guitar riffs merging with reeses, but complimented by really nice atmospherics and euphoric strings on top.

FRICTION

Thugged Out Bitch (Adam F & Fresh rmx) - Valve
Dillinja's pounding kick drum, heavy bass line smasher from a couple of years ago, gets the treatment from the Breakbeat Kaos crew. Keeping the vibe of the drums on the same vibe as the original, this one's for the mixers. A job well done.

Gas Mask rmx - Ed Rush & Optical - Virus
Keeping on the remix tip this issue, we turn to the

the 98-99 era. The main difference for me is this remix is more of a straight up dance floor formula. As usual the production is solid and the crowd reaction is always a good one.

Calibre ft MC Fats - Neighborhood - Dub
Calibre comes correct once again with a track that made my jaw drop when I first heard it. Fats vocals sit perfectly alongside Calibre's rolling breaks and ultra catchy bass line. Make sure you reserve your copy of this twelve (with 'Drop it down' on the flip), gonna be one of the biggest singles this year.

Troubleshoot (The Militia rmx) - Resonant Evil
Our final remix of the issue, and its taken from the barrage of firing tracks forthcoming on Renegade Hardware. This one was a massive track from last year and was popular with a lot of DJ's. I went to work on the remix alongside Nu Balance and tried to keep the same kind of vibe but changing the riffs slightly. Check it out for yourself.

Nemesis - DJ Friction - Valve
Soon to come on the forthcoming Valve LP, due out towards the end of the year, This is me in my more aggressive mode, smashing breaks, twisty basslines and pounding subs, one for the dance floor heads.

MARCUS INTALEX

Calibre - Hypnotize - Soul:r
He's bloody done it again. Possibly more sublime than last year's Jaheim remix. This is D&B's answer to a DJ Premier production. Still in its prototype stage, this tune should be the sound of summer 2004.

Craggs & Parallel Forces - Thundersoul - Valve
Geordies in top tune shocker. Straight out of newcastle this new production partnership looks set to take the scene by storm. 'Thundersoul's' brilliance is in its simplicity. It's music, energy and pure groove: just how I like 'em. Also, look out for the superb but stupidly titled 'Fizzy Piglets'. Move over Alan Shearer.

Marcus Intalex - Zumbar / Temperance - Soul:R
Forthcoming on Soul:r, this 12" is my homage to the infamous Manchester club: The Hacienda. 'Zumbar' is a 303 roller harking back to the old acid house days. 'Temperance' is more detroit and is named after the Hacienda's regular indie night because it samples a well known guitar band.

D-Bridge - Silent Wonder - Exit
Darren 'the demon' D-Brige is on a roll. 'Silent music. Totally future and deep as fuck, it's definately not something you'll hear on many floors across the world, but this is too good for me not to play.

High Contrast - Persistance of Memory - Hospital
Two words... fuckin' ace. Nuff said. Look out for the album because from what I've heard so far it's gonna be a killer. Wales 1 - England 0.

ANDY C

Fresh - Colossus / Hooded - RAM Records
After a stint in the states Fresh comes back with the damage. A double A-side forthcoming on RAM. 'Colussus' with its unforgettable Hustler vocal and huge intro devastates all in its wake. 'Hooded' brings pure fresh flava to the table. Watch out for this, its a monster! Also coming later in the year we have 'Twister' with 'All that Jazz'.

Photek rmx - The Horn Track - Metalheadz
Photek goes in on some landmark business here. Anyone from back in the day will know about this. Prepare to be taken on a ride into 2004 as this track enveloped the whole sound system, venue and world, truly awe inspoiring. This is gonna be first out the box for a long while to come. Pure metalheadz flava.

Ed Rush & Optical - Bacteria (Pendulum rmx)
Everyone that has followed Ed Rush & Optical knows where the original stands in Virus history. Pendulum can do no wrong at the moment, and they certainly put their mark on this classic which smashes up the place. Also from the guys from down under look out for a certain rmx of Nightbreed's 'Pack of Wolves' coming soon.

Sub Focus - Sound Guy / Blue Note - Dub
Having emerged as one of the new producers to watch this year, our new signing Sub Focus continues his onslaught with 'Sound Guy' and 'Blue Note'. 'Sound Guy' gels jungle and drum & bass into one naughty package that's killer. 'Blue Note' sees him switching between dark synth stabs and jazzy double bass. Sub Focus mastering all styles.

DJ Hype - You Must Think First (Shimon rmx)
After killing us with his 'Tudor Rose' remix Shimon tackles yet another all-time classic creating a new one in the process. everybody thats familiar with the history of our scene will know the original and Shimon does not let us down. Bringing it back up to date with his own brand of contorted bass and smashing beats. Amazing production.

D-KAY

01	calyx & Illskillz	thru your eyes	moving shadow
02	d-kay	martians part 2	dub
03	dom & roland	chronology LP	moving shadow
04	shimon & sparfunk	cold killa	ram
05	artificial intelligence	through the gate	dub
06	juju	skylarking	dub
07	Illskillz & concord dawn	watch me now	Illskillz
08	robbie craig	experience (Illskillz rmx)	dub
09	calibre	drop It down	soul:r
10	generation dub	champagne cocktails	dub

PENDULUM

01	dom & roland	paradrenasite (hive rmx)	shadow
02	konsta	autumn 2004	dub
03	silent witness	relay	dna audio
04	chris su	back and forth	dub
05	corrupt souls	broadcast	dub
06	unknown error	shadow and flame	dub
07	rob f and kiko	untitled	Dub
08	phace	now!	subtitles
09	mindscape	lightfall (cord remix)	dsci4
10	cartridge	x minus one	freak

KENNY KEN

01	mace & kenny ken	evil streets rmx	mix and blen
02	unique dj	chimes	dub
03	signs of the zodiac	gemini	unknown
04	drumsound and smith	the odyssey	prototype
05	dillinja	in the grind	valve
06	crissy criss	playin on the motorway	back2basics
07	ringleader	enuffisenuff	dub
08	zen	goodtime girl	dub
09	mistify	nailgun	mix and blen
10	nightwalker	cheesegrater	grid

TOTAL SCIENCE

01	unknown	warning	dub
02	total science	defcom 69	metalheadz
03	q project	nightmoves (clipz rmx)	cia
04	marcus intalex	zumbar	dub
05	zinc ft slarta john	flim (calibre rmx)	bingo
06	total science	prozac (q project rmx)	cia
07	high contrast	racing green	hospital
08	logistics	hold on, be strong	advanced
09	total science	paradise lost	cia
10	q project	nation 2 nation	hospital

DJ INK

01	photek	baltimore	dub
02	ink & j.dub	the joint	renegade hardware
03	da gremlinz & stranjah	breaker	architecture
04	kontrol	plasma	architecture
05	dj ink	beneath the surface	dub
06	grooverider	breakz tune	dub
07	digital	square rock	dub
08	spirit	four walls	dub
09	da gremlinz & stranjah	diapor rash	architecture
10	logistics	together	hospital

DJ KID

01	samurai ft charlotte	dayz (peshay mx)	dub
02	greg packer	dancehall tune	dub
03	dj kryptik	going down (devize & 3a mx)	dub
04	calibre & high contrast	mr majestic	signature
05	dj samurai	bizznizz	restless natives
06	dj samurai ft charlotte	dayz	restless natives
07	dj samurai ft charlotte	i wanna tell you	dub
08	the outfit	rockstar	planet funk dub
09	dj kryptik	going down	restless natives
10	dj samurai	eastern call	dub

drum and bass reviews

Edited by: **Frenzic, DJ Epik, Shodan, Ben Holdtight, Guy Brickley.**

9-10 classic. **8** killer. **5-7** it works. **3-4** filler. **1-2** ashtray

8 Devise & 3A – Shady Hitman – 3D Mode Recordings

Gangster business on 'Shady Hitman' as the 3D Mode crew get down and dirty. 'Shady..' rolls in with a brooding synth intro, before dropping into bass heavy business. The b-line is deep and minimal, and alongside some stepping percussion this one should tear up any floor. 'Rich Getting Richer' has got a big grimey b-line that slides up the scale, and a preacher style vocal that rolls in and out. Both sides are well executed jump-up.

8 Blame – Closer/Citadel – 720° Degrees

Blame is rapidly shedding off the image that he makes lighter tunes, and this latest confirms that. 'Closer' is a heavy minimal tune with big atmospheric whooshes, rapid beats and interesting sub licks. 'Citadel' hammers out vicious breaks early on and lets the bass roll in underneath. There's some tidy edits and rolls, and if you like your breaks you should be feeling this one.

7 V/A - Sektor 6 EP - Advanced Records

The latest edition in the series. Total Science's 'Finding Nemo' is a track that's getting props. The beats are executed with style, whilst the bassline is minimal and grimey. When you crank this one up loud it hits the spot. Raf & Ill Logic's 'No More Words' has got a lot of atmosphere, running with some quality bongos and beats, a soulful male vocal, and subtle deep bass. Digital's piece hammers breaks at you, whilst Commix' is a rolling track laced with deep sub. This series has always offered a good cross section of D&B styles, and its good to see the tradition continued.

7 Commix / Logistics - Dont Let Me Know - Advanced

The Cambridge trio head this soulful release on CIA's sister label. 'Don't Let Me Know' is a soulful track with a tidy female vox, organ chords, rolling beats and a bubbling round bassline that moves along with the percussion. Logistics takes control of the flip with 'Hold On, Be Strong'which is more dancefloor orientated with a heavy sub line and rolling beats.

7 Freestylers - The Slammer (Clipz rmx) - Against The Grain

Clipz flexes a manic bass driven dancefloor vibe for the remix. The bass wobbles and distorts whilst the crisp beats step over the top. The flip side is the Freestylers popular 'Push Up'. Also check for Roni Size's 'Get A Life' mix on a seperate 12.

7 Mason - My Sound - Bad Habit Recordings

The Mason version uses some mad African sounding samples with screaming and voodoo style rants. It's well on a jungle style with amen breaks, sub bass, and grimey bass stabs. D-Star's version runs on a similar vibe with an added rising synth riff that shifts into a twisted piano line, alongside the cymbol led breaks. Jungle vibes all round.

7 Various – Razin' Hell EP – Back 2 Basics

It's been 6 years since B2B released a mix album, so they got on the case with 'Razin' Hell'. The 4 track EP kicks off with Twisted's take of the classic 'World Of Music', which he pulls off with ease and maintains the vibe of the original. The 'World Of Music' remix is kind of on the same tip as the 'Rollidge' remix, using a simple but effective bassline. Spice's contribution comes in the name of 'Cops' with a siren creeping in and out over a bass heavy roller. Benny Blanco's 'A Little Sumthin' starts with a wicked ragga intro and drops into a deep rolling dub bassline, with sharp beats flowing over the top, and finishes the EP nicely.

7 V/A - Rowdy Time EP - Barcode

Raiden kicks off this heavy EP with layered breaks, twisted bass and sub licks on 'Calibre 44 Killer'. After their darkside remix of '20/20' Chase and Status are back with the title track 'Rowdy Time'. A pitched bass rolls along with firing beats, that will smash up any dancefloor. Evol Intent and Resonant Evil take care of the other plate, and if you like it hard and nasty it's worth getting rowdy! Also check for PSI Dreams' 'Stitches'.

8 Materia – Impact (Paradox Rmx)/Impact – Basic Recs

Paradox is brought in for the remix, and stamps his own style all over Materia's track. The edits are well executed, with symbol led breaks. Paradox combines a deep dub bass alongside the haunting atmospherics that give the original such depth. Materia's original runs on crisp beats and a catchy riff which pitches nicely in the second breakdown. Both sides are well produced, and take the tune on two different flavours. Also check for Genetix' 'Structures'.

8 Cause 4 Concern – Sky Harbour/Tracker – BC Presents

The 'BC presents...' series is shaping up nicely, and this latest offering doesn't disappoint. 'Sky Harbour' is trademark C4C with minimal funk, a dark driving bassline, and layered percussion. 'Tracker' drops in with a thick and heavy bass, with some interesting tops and percussion rolling in and out giving the tune some wicked atmosphere.

7 D-Type - The Mission / Slam - Beatz

'The Mission' see's D-Type on a summer tip with uplifting strings laid over trademark heavy bass, and tough breaks. 'Slam' is big bass and stepping breaks that is alright, but nothing new. Both tracks are well produced, but there's not a lot too fresh going on.

8 John B - Midnight Air - Beta

Despite fulfilling his aim of reworking eighties chancers Heaven 17 and Howard Jones, the sampler from our big haired hero's debut Beta album continues to dabble with lightstick-large trance drops - mind the Ciccone name checking mobilus interruptus. A typically facetious b-side turns all these niceties on their head, with a banging snake-styled rattler.

9 Zinc - Flim (mixes) - Bingo

There's a few good vocal tracks around at the moment, but for me it's this one that's killing it! Slarta Jon's wicked ragga vocal sits over the top of Zinc's rounded trademark bass that bubbles along nicely. Zinc's original has received a few remixes to cover the spectrum of genres of Bingo, and who better to remix it than Calibre?! It's the vocal side with the deep dubby bassline underneath that gets my vote. Zinc and Calibre's versions are both quality, wicked stuff from the True Playaz Don! Also check for Raw Q's rollin' 'Vital Soul' release.

9 Danism - Come To You (Nu Tone rmx) - Brand:Nu

This is the 3rd release on Nu:Tones new Brand:Nu imprint. He takes on a remix of the House producer Danism's 'Come To You'. This track is pure liquid vibes with a soulful female vox, lush piano chords and tight beats. Little bro Logistics rolls with a deep bassline, rapid beats and thick organ chords, making a worthy B-side. The title track is liquid at it's best.

9 Fresh - Submarines / (Pendulum rmx) - Breakbeat Kaos

As far as the time from production to release goes this ones gotta win the prize. Fresh produced this during Bad Company's Digital Nation live project, and years later, after 'nuff fan mail, he's released it. The original is an electro tune that is gonna surprise a lot of you after hearing the hype around the track. Pendulum are brought in for the remix and come up trumps. This one rolls on a stabbing synth bassline, and joined with the atmospheric vocals of the original, it hits the spot. Another dancefloor shredding release from Fresh and Adams label.

7 T.S & Baron - Monkey See, Monkey Do rmx - C.I.A. Ltd

The Oxford lads roll out a couple of remixes for the summer. 'Monkey See, Monkey Do' is remixed by Baron, and as expected it's bass heavy dancefloor business. The beats fire along, and the bass is twisted a bit to give the remix a new feel. 'Night Moves' beats are crisp, and the bass is heavy as expected from Clipz. This one needs to be listened to on a loud system to fully appreciate.

7 Stakka & Nu Balance - Shady/Moon Patrol - Cargo

Brighton based Militia men hook up for Cargo 005. 'Shady' has a thick nasty reece hook that drives through you from the break, coupled alongside choppy beats. This one's got a nice minimal feel, but still keeps a lot of energy. 'Moon Patrol' has got a funky deep bassline and qwerky riffs, and is a tidy bit showing why both these lads have had a string of strong releases.

8 C4C - Seawolf/Paranormal - Cause 4 Concern Recs

'Seawolf' rolls in with thick atmospherics and haunting dub vocal. The drop is tidy with precision beats rolling over the top of a warped bassline. There's some nice touches, like a female harmony that gives this tune depth, and this is an example of C4C doing what they do at the best. The flip fuses aquatic sub undertones and amen edits, but its all about the A-side for me.

8 All Night Long – Karl K, Kaos & Jae Kennedy - Circle Recs

Circle Records, spawned from Circle Management, releases its first of many with the help of the American trio. The original is a funky, disco tune with a thick slice of summer vibes rolling through, using a nice female vocal, with tight beats and some wicked builds and drops. For the flip, Brit soldiers Matrix & Fierce get called in on remix duty. A fat flowing trademark bassline alongside tight rattling beats make this a worthy re-rub, and gives the plate two distinct flavours.

9 Breakage/Alias – Plum Fairy/Admit To Love – Critical

Breakage tunes that hit the shelf seem to have a consistent quality level, and 'Plum Fairy' is no different. The heavy dub bass rolls along perfectly with layered breaks that maintain a flowing vibe. The diva vocals float over the top giving this heavy track a soulful, intelligent feel. If your into your breaks, check this out, and if your not check it out too, cos this one is sick!

6 Amit – Village Folk/Lost Voices – Commercial Suicide

'Village Folk' has got a thick ethnic vibe with Asian wailings breaking into tight beats, a mesmerising synth riff, and deep sub. The flip has interesting minimal beats with low sub stabs, but seems to lack direction and flow. Also look out for Chris SU's 'Undercover Dub'.

7 Benny Page/Rhythm Beaters - Chainsaw - Cutters Choice

Benny Page debuts on Cutters Choice with 'Chainsaw', a future jump up track that bends and morphs the bass alongside some metallic beats. 'The Fears' is an interesting track that rolls along with progressive beats, a thick bass riff coupled with subs, and an unmistakeable hip-hop style lyric.

7 Bulletproof & DJ Riddle - Mindframe / Hit Me - Cyanide

The NZ boys increase the pace with this latest bit on their own imprint. 'Mindframe' rolls with a funky deep bass line and bubbling beats. 'Hit Me' is the track for me with a deep 808 bass riff, king of soul James Brown samples and crisp metallic beats. Definitely worth a listen.

7 Dist Minds vs EZ Rollers - Fight Club - D Style

Distorted Minds and the Rollers doesn't seem like the most obvious pairing, but the result does the job. The track has Distorted's trademarks stamped all over it with that familiar swing step beat, string samples and a wobbly bassline. The percussion is a bit beefier with more layers than an average D.M. tune, and there's some nice filter effects running through. If it's music to make the floor shake you're after, then you won't go wrong with this.

7 Total Science - Good Old Days - Defunked

Oxford's finest take a daytrip out on Defunked, and it's a smooth ride. 'Good Old Days' is a tight roller with the well executed percussion you'd expect from Total Science. The deep bassline rolls along nicely and the disco break works well. The flip 'Hinge & Bracket' is on a soulful funky tip and moves along at ease.

7 FX 909 - Element of Life / Lady - Defunked

FX909 has got a couple of releases due out at the moment, and the quality control is a high standard on all. The Parisian uses thick organ chords, a soulful vocal hook, and links these elements with a driving beat and strong bassline. FX909 is definitely one to look out for.

7 Skynet - Retribution / Phattlip - Discrete Recordings

Both sides run on a dark tip. 'Retribution' runs rattling beats, a drawn out bass and rave stabs. 'Phatlip' rolls along nicely, led by a synth riff and firing beats. Look out for a forthcoming double pack at the end of the summer as well.

8 Break & Hydro - Breathless / Deliverance - DNAudio

Break and Hydro are fast making a name for themselves. 'Breathless' drops into a heavy morphed bassline, after an atmospheric breakdown. The percussion is tight and rollin', and there's a nice switch from hi-hats into a twisted bongo. 'Deliverance' is a quality techy track that flows nicely. The beats are crisp and there's a good use of atmospherics to give the track depth. Both sides are tight, and show why these two are getting props right now.

9 Fresh - Floodlight / Tomb Raider - Dogs on Acid Recs

One of the most talked about tunes of 2004, the tune tells a story of a couple going to a party and getting mashed on ecstasy, amongst crazy future beats and nasty bass. There's a 'Vault' esque dive into swing beats, and some wicked switches that fly in left right and centre. 'Tomb Raider' is a heavy bass steppa, with a tough snare and rolling percussion. The amount of random samples flying in is sick, my favourite has gotta be the wild west style "Easy boy, that bassline hasn't even dropped yet!". There's just too much sickness rolling out of B.K. at the moment!

7 DJ Motive – Don't Get It Twisted/Roc Raider – DSC14

Number 14 for Trace's techy imprint, and the man brings in DJ Motive for the job. 'Don't Get It Twisted' is a sub bass driven track with stepping beats alongside some nice bongo loops and rolls. The flip follows the same vein with a recurring b-line and varied tops that sneak in an out to give it a kind of bouncy techno feel.

7 A Sides - Unity - East Side

One of the hardest working men in drum and bass throws down more killer cuts for his own imprint. Whilst the main play concerns itself with servicing those seeking Bambaataa-esque beats, so the flip goes hard and heavy, a thumping array of breaks and low-end grunt set against the gentle elegance of a four-bar synth construct.

8 Specimen A - Hold On ft Angeluqe / Take you - Emcee

'Hold On' is a sick track! Hammering breaks layered and chopped to perfection sit over deep growling sub bass that dips and switches nicely, with Angeluque's vocal floating in and out nicely. The other side's on a rave tip with the breaks and kicks getting chopped up more. 'Take You' is a good track, but its all about the A-side for me. Also look out for Cybin's 'Tripod rmx'.

8 D Bridge - Original World / Tradition - Exit Records

Hot on the heels of the killer 'True Romance' comes his latest 12 on his new experimental imprint Exit. 'Original World' is an atmospheric track with tight percussion, rhodes and strings, and a deep mesmerising bassline. The flip uses a quality jungle break, thundering bass and haunting vocals and strings. D-Bridge is emerging with a strong, distinctive style, and these two tracks are testament to that.

8 DJ SS / Gen Dub - For Those Who Can Handle - Formation

The 3rd instalment of SS's 'S-Files' touches down with a little help from his friends. Generation Dub muck in on the A-side, which kicks off with an electric guitar riff that's full of reverb. A trademark Formation bassline drops alongside stepping beats, and although a lot of this labels releases sound similar, this one's definitely one of the stronger examples of how this style can damage.

7 Cartridge - End of the World / Dark Shadows - Freak Recs

Dylan brings in Cartridge for a serious breaks workout. 'End of the world' is one going out to all you Technicality heads, with breaks flying in left right and centre, alongside cutting rave stabs and sub. 'Dark Shadows' is on a similar tip, but is more nasty. If you like your heavy choppage then give this one a listen.

9 Sub Focus - Acid Test/Get On Up - Frequency

'Acid Test' is getting into a lot of top DJs sets, and there's good reason! It's got a fat drop with a twisted synth line, hammering amens, and a wicked switch into a distorted brass stepping riff, alongside some deep sub licks. The flip has got a thick slice of soulfunk running through with a Maceo And The Mack's "Tighten Up" sample, as well as a funky deep bassline, and brass touches. A fantastic debut.

9 Die & Clipz – Monorail / Fresh Evidence – Full Cycle

There's no missing this Full Cycle collaboration if you've heard it out recently. 'Monorail' kicks in with the 'I got the funk, you got the funk..." sample before dropping into a sublime bassline that does have the funk. The bass is minimal, with that deep rounded feel that Clipz has perfected. The beats are crisp, and there's some subtle samples and percussion that top off this well produced track. The steppy flip has also been getting mad props, but for me it's 'Monorail' which takes the prize.

6 Amit - Changes / Changing Lanes - Function

After his dubby contribution to the quality 'Quad 2 EP' Amit returns to Function for another session. 'Changes' rolls on a big dub bassline alongside Eastern samples and catchy synth riff, which is Amit's style all over. 'Changing Lanes' is on a similar tip, and although both tracks are well produced, neither are too exciting.

6 Magna Karta - Punk Jazz / Junk Step - Gain

Showing that Drum n Bass truly is global up steps Magna Karta from South Africa. 'Punk Jazz' runs with a Twisted style bassline and rolling percussion. 'Junk Step' is better with a quirky bassline coupled with rattling percussion that breaks for cynbol crashes, but neither tunes are up to much.

8 Hazard – Get The Fuk Up/Wonkey Donkey – Ganja Recs

'Get The Fuk Up' is a heavy slice of darkstep with a nasty bassline and rattling beats. I wasn't feeling this one on my first listen, but the more I hear it the more I like. The flip 'Wonkey Donkey' is what you'd expect from a Hazard track with this title - a fat bouncy riff with hectic jump up beats and some familiar samples. Hazard fans should be feeling both sides, and if your not into the bouncy side of drum & bass it's worth picking up for the darker A-side.

8 Phantasy, Shodan, UK apache - Gimme de Gal - Ganja

Jungle vibes running right through this one! 'Gimme de Gal's' been smashing it on dub for a while now, and for good reason. UK Apache steps back on a track with his distinctive ragga style lyrics. The production is heavy with a fat filtered riff, and some rattling beats. Jungle meets Drum n Bass in 2004 and it's dancefloor devastation.

8 Various – Future Sound Of Cambridge EP – Hospital

You what? Cambridge! Its not the first town that springs to mind when you think of Drum n Bass, but to be fair its putting up a good fight. Nu:Tone's offering, 'Millie's Theme' is pure summer soul with funk, rhodes hooks and rolling subs. 'Roots Train' by Commix is on a pure dub tip, and needs to be played on a loud system to be fully appreciated, as does 'The Wurly Tune' their over piece on the EP. Logistics 'Together' is quality with a lush flowing bassline and epic tops, and for me is the highlight of this well crafted EP.

9 High Contrast - Twilight's Last Gleaming - Hospital

It's been a while since the Welsh wizard's last release, but trust, the lad's been busy! 'Twilight's Last Gleaming' is a tidy liquid track with a deep house/soul vibe running through. A nice gospel loop runs throughout the track, and High Contrast balances different instruments with deep bass perfectly. Piano, organ and guitar riffs all roll in and out alongside a wicked brass line. As far as liquid goes it doesn't come much better produced than this. The excellent 'Made It Last Night' is on the flip.

8 V/A - The Remix EP - Grid

Grid's on the attack! DJ Ron's remix of 'Cats Eyes' is filthy bass that runs ragged, coupled with crunching beats. The one that's been getting the props is Baron's take on Zen's 'Turnstyle'. Baron seems to have the Midas touch at the moment. 'Turnstyle' rolls with a familiar bass riff to the original, some tight percussion, and new FX. Drumsound & Bassline Smith's track is the one for me with a heavy bassline that leaves no prisoners. The drumwork is tight, and there's some nice subs to go next to the dominant bassline. This is definitely one of Grid's stronger EPs. Also check for Nightwalker's 'Smashed'.

8 Swallow Ya Soul/Zombie - J Majik & Wickerman - Infrared

The mighty Infrared duo embark on a very brave move with this 12". 'Swallow Your Soul' is 80% triplet (Swing beat) and although some of you may be cringing this absolutely smashes the dancefloor! Horns, sirens and a wobbly bassline run through this one constantly. 'Zombie' is a thick slice of dancefloor action with a chunky rising b-line. Kind of on the simple but effective vibe, it rolls along nicely with subtle changes in the crisp percussion and some well placed rolls, and will smash any floor.

7 Danny Wheeler & Sub Focus - Ghost - Infrared

Danny Wheeler hooks up with someone who's getting his name about a lot at the moment, Sub Focus. 'Ghost' is a big bass dancefloor track that rolls with a distorted rising bass hook, alongside stepping beats. The flip is on a similar vibe with a bouncy bass and stepping beats. Both are designed to get the floor moving, and should do the job.

8 Cujo - Eyes Wide Shut / Space walker - Inneractive

Welsh talent Cujo is not the first producer I would have expected to see on Spirit's Inneractive imprint, but he certainly has some tricks up his sleeve. 'Eyes Wide Shut' is full of hypnotic bass stabs and unnerving cinematic samples, and just carves its way slowly into your brain. Like Spirit's productions, these tracks have a spacious feel to them without combining too many sounds, and rely instead on using the samples in the right place at the right time. 'Spacewalker' is a strongly atmospheric track, with stark synth rhythms working their way up and down the scale, while a booming sub rumbles below.

8 Xample/Alliance – In Session/Jive – Intercom

After coming runner up in the DNBA remix comp for 'Road Runner' EZ rollers picked up 'Jive' from US based Alliance, for their 'New Skool Blazers' series. 'Jive' is a bass heavy roller with some nice stabs, a female vocal, and a wicked ragga sample. It's a big bouncy track, and although there's nothing too fresh about it, it works well and will do damage on the dancefloor. Bristol new boy Xample picks up the flip with 'In Session' which is on a similar tip, but a bit more grimey than the A-side. Also check for System D's 'Here's The Power'.

7 Muffler – Dark Future/Vicious Circle - Invader

The Fin badman seems to have releases coming out of his ears at the moment, and the quality ain't too bad either. 'Dark Future' has got a heavy drop after an atmospheric terminator style build up. The drum work is tight with some wicked high hat and symbol rolls. The flip is a heavy dis-jointed steppa.

8 Contour/Laroque - Come Tomorrow - Jerona Fruits

The latest offering from Jerona Fruits, and they come with more funk laced vibes. Contour's 'Come Tommorrow' is on a pure funky house vibe with diva vocals and a strong instrumental vibe. It's Laroque's 'Boomerang' that stands out for me with it's pure liquid vibe. The tune bubbles along nicely with a tight brass sample, and deep organ chords which give it a thick atmospheric flava.

7 Cybin – Stealth Dread/Docking Bay – Lockdown Recs

'Stealth Dread' gets the A-side, but it's the flip which gets my vote. 'Docking Bay' uses manic breaks with a punching bass line. The drum work is interesting, and the bass has got a minimal, raw vibe that gives the track a grimey feel to it.

8 Dom & Roland - Dance All Night - Moving Shadow

Taken from Dom's Chronology album, 'Dance All Night' fuses some twisted tops, deep bass and an atmospheric female vocal. If you like your heavy epic's than this'll go down a treat. 'Just So You Know' uses a "I like it raw" sample which sums up the tune nicely, with more deep bass and twisted breaks as expected from Dom. Good work. Check for a Calyx rmx on a seperate 12".

8 Calyx - Inner Distance EP - Metalheadz

Calyx is back on Headz with some nasty darkside business. There's a couple of collaborations like 'Dark Night' with Kontrol, which blends a haunting male vocal alongside a choppy bassline, rolling metallic beats and acidy tops. 'Fear This' uses a simple gritty bass riff alongside driving breaks that are arranged well to give the track a lot of punch, and high energy. If you're a fan of Headz or Calyx you ain't gonna be disappointed.

8 Futurebound - We See A Who - Maximum Boost

Rinse alert, Liverpool jungle legend Futurebound connects with Capleton for a ragga fused slice of jungle fresh. The blips, bleeps and depths of bass work rattle along with some justice, a suitably gruff accompaniment to the lyrical magma which spits form the lips of our uptown ragga cappo.

8 Culture Shock - The Vega EP - Moving Shadow

Apparently a protégé of Dom & Roland, Culture Shock makes a pretty impressive debut with this 4 track on the label that has breaks so much new talent these days. The title track kicks things off in fine style, packed with sweeping terminator soundscapes, modulating bass frequencies and chopped vox samples. 'White Knight' is a steppy, bass-laden piece with some incredible synth patterns lilting over the beats, combined with some twisted horror-film atmospherics. 'Alarms' has elements of the early Matrix sound, complete with big analogue bassline subtle edits, and a sweet rhodes hook that you'd think would sound out of place, but it really works. Definitely one to keep an very close eye on.

7 Danny C - Serious / Foul - Nu Directions

Danny C has been in this game nuff years and you don't have to be a brain scientist to understand why. 'Serious' starts off with some soulful/liquid vibes before a Ragga Twinz sample marks the start of the bass. The bass is a deep sub-low line that sounds sick when played loud, especially alongside the rattling percussion. 'Foul' on the flipside rolls with a deep bass melody, bongo style beats that sit perfectly on top, and subtle porn samples. Both tracks are tidy and show why Danny has had a string of releases on big labels. Also check Beta 2's 'Milan'.

8 Paradox & Nucleus – Think about It/Soul Message – OSR

Paradox hooks up with partner in crime Nucleus for some drum work business. The amens are edited with precision, keeping it rolling and splicing in new breaks over deep subs. 'Soul Message' is on a funkier tip, with just as manic breaks, and a deeper-than-deep bass. If your feeling this side of jungle then it's worth checking this one.

7 Infiltrata - Against All Odds / Toss It Up – Payload

Infiltrata is a new LA based producer with this debut on Payload. 'Against All Odds' has got a nice use of a hip hop style brass loop, with a bubbling bassline and rolling tidy beats. The flip is a bit heavier with some thick stabs and a thick deep b-line, taking it on quite dirty rave vibe. This ones looking good for a debut, and I reckon Infiltrata could be one to watch.

7 JuJu - Lightning / Exotica - Phuturo

'Lightning' rolls in with a Raggae sample before a big bouncing bassline drops in with rattling beats. 'Exotica' on the flip bubbles along nicely with a rounded bass, some intricate beats and a nice use of vocal and brass samples, which give this track a mellow dancefloor vibe.

7 Rap ft Danny C – The Riff – Proper Talent

The Rap is back! It's been a long time since the last release on Proper Talent, and this new release continues where things left off. 'The Riff' does what it says on the tin with a catchy synth riff, coupled with breaks that tightly roll over grimey bass. Danny C remixes 'Music In Me' on the flip, and trust me, this one is heavy!

9 Bassline Smith & Drumsound - Odyssey - Prototype

If you haven't heard this tune, then what have you been doing the last six months?! I don't think this tune even needs a review, it's that bad! The sinister intro subsides to one of 2004's most killer basslines. He don't get the name 'Bassline' for no reason! It's been too long since the last Prototype release, but f*ck it, it's been worth the wait!

8 V/A - Holding Room EP - Quarantine

Fans of Fierce's imprint will have been eagerly awaiting this, as Quarantine's quality over quantity ethos means this is only the 3rd release on this label. The mighty 'Innocence' gets a brought up to date by Hive, who brings in a new vocalist to contrast the haunting original. The vibe of the Fresh & Fierce track runs through with some added breaks and FX. Keaton & Nitrox take care of the flip with the hard hitting 'Users' whilst C4 C's 'Nightseige' drops with

drum and bass reviews

Artifical Intelligence

DJ Spice

Dylan

Twisted Individual

a killer bass hook, rattling percussion and some well placed atmospherics. New boys Break and Hydro top off the EP of with 'Dream Sequence' which rolls along nicely with tidy beats, and a thick rounded bass. Quarantine fans won't be disappointed.

8 Hazard - It's Just Called X - Radius

The title track is a lot more dirty than expected from Hazard. The beats are tough and a lot less stepping, suggesting that the True Playing Brummie is looking to ditch the nu-skool jump up pigeon hole. The 'Overload' remix is a darker take on the original, with rapid breaks and a heavy bass. Radius looks to the future, and things are looking bright!

8 V/A - Ram Raiders 6 - RAM Records

Ram Raiders volume 6 has got some interesting collaborations. Sub Focus, whose recent smasher on Frequency has been killing it, gets a side to himself with 'Strobe'. The drop is killer with a tearout reece line that morphs and switches, crashing breaks and some wicked atmospherics. Ram Trilogy's 'Nightvision' is killer with a quality female vox, tight beats, string chords and a thick flowing bassline. 'Cold Killa' is getting props at the moment, and 'Now's The Time' by Fierce & Moving Fusion is a good mix of their styles. Another relentless Ram Raid!

7 Optiv ft BSE – Release Me / Gazala – Red Light Recs

Optiv hooks up with Black Sun Empire, and takes full control on the flip. 'Release Me' is a tidy techy tune with percussion switches and tops smoothly rolling in and out. The flip is a heavier number with a dark and slightly funky bass. The beats are stepping with intricate percussion rolls floating over top. If you like your minimal tech-step you should check this one out.

6 Crystal Clear - Lets Get Started - Reformed Recs

Newcomers Crystal Clear step onto SS's Reformed. 'Lets Get Started' uses an orchestral horn, cinematic vocals and low frequency bass. It sounds very similar to Distorted Minds but with rolling beats. 'Original Ridem' starts off nicely with a warm bass and some punching kick and snare business, but then drops into a predictable bassline that is all too uncommon from this camp.

6 Pacific - Auto Funk / Feels so Good - Rehab

All about summer vibes with this one. The aptly titled 'Auto Funk' runs with a sunshine hook, subtle grimey stabs, and rolling bass and beats. 'Feels So Good' has a distorted male vocal before a drop into 808 style sub bass business. The beats are tidy with some nice rolls and loops, and the vibe switches nicely from being chilled into dancefloor and back.

7 V/A - Remix EP - Renegade Hardware

Raiden steps up to remix Loxy & Dylan's 'Fraggle Rock' and does the original proud, keeping a lot of the vibe from the original but injecting his own heavy stepping stance on the hit. 'Certain Sound' gets the VIP treatment from Drumworkz and Evol Intent jump on Future Cuts 'Ghetto Style'. Evol Intent's remix is a dirty take on the original with some wicked drops and switches, showing why they are quickly racking up releases on the heavier side of jungle. Loxy and Ink's recent 'Straight Up Menace' gets a re-rub to close this heavy Hardware EP.

8 Raiden - Utopia EP - Renegade Hardware

Raiden starts the ball rolling with the title track 'Utopia'. This track has got his style stamped all over with a strong Techno influence, and twisted dark bassline that switches and morphs nicely, and stepping beats with percussion layered over. 'Arch Angel' is an epic dark track that knocks the breath out of you. The ripping chords cut through you before it drops into a quality fat bassline, with rattling beats rolling over top. The EP finishes on a Kryptic Mindz mix of '6 Foot Ditch' that pulls off layered breaks and deep bass with a lot of style. Raiden fans shouldn't be disappointed.

8 Sonic & Silver - The Russian - Science Fiction

Sonic & Silver join forces again with two tracks that were originally gonna get released on the duo's album for Virus (which has been put back to early 2005). 'The Russian' is on a classic Virus tip with a gritty minimal bass line, tech step beats that break into a more rolling tempo with high hats tapping over top, and some taste samples from that era. 'Crash Master' is a heavy hitter with monster amens and a deep down and nasty bass that will damage any dancefloor.

9 V/A - Renegade Rollers Vol 4 - Renegade Recordings

This EP should go down well. Junior Cartel's 'Visionary Dreamer' has got a fat slice of disco funk running through. 'Can't Take It' is an upbeat ambient track that uses some quality melodies, with the infectious beats it gives this track a thick groove. 'Mac 10' by Hold Tight has been getting a lot of attention of late, and justly so. This deep roller is funky, yet runs with some dark undertones. The Insiders contribution bubbles along nicely with a soulful vibe.This is a tightly produced EP all round, and is definitely worth a listen.

8 Nightwalker - Program 2 Kill - Signal recs

Nightwalker's another name that seems to be cropping up a lot at the moment, and you can see why. 'Program 2 Kill' is a dirty steppa, with a grimey bass that switches, and rolling beats. 'Egyptian Sunrise' is a mental tune! There's plenty of switches, some fresh beat rolls, and some industrial bass. The haunting Egyptian riff in breakdown is quality.

7 Signs of Zodiac - Cancer - Signs

'Cancer' starts with skippy beats and a chopped synth riff. When the bass drops it's a nice surprise with a gritty bass riff that slides up. The flip is on a similar tip with the bass jumping around more, and some sirens alongside rattling cow bell beats. Definitely one of the better instalments in this series.

7 Jarman - Carpet Bombin' / Flat 32 - Sinuous

Portsmouth's darksider touches down on Sinuous with some twisted shit! Acidy tops fly over a muffled bass, stepping beats and a quality synth riff on 'Carpet Bommin'. Jarman's Techno influences shine through on this track as it builds and drops throughout. The samples used are a good selection, and the atmospheric synths give the tune good depth.

8 Skynet – Acid Drops/Ghost Train – Skynet Recordings

Brighton based Skynet has got a string of releases lined up for the summer months. 'Acid Drops' builds nicely, using atmospheric synths, a twisted acidy bassline and crisp beats. The flip is on a swing tip, and for me, it's the well executed a-side that gets my vote.

8 Mathematics – Here And Now/Backdraft – Social Studies

Mathematics debut on Social Studies with two strong tracks. 'Here and Now' is amen driven, laced with a techno style bleep line, pianos and soulful vocal snippets. 'Backdraft' breaks into a twisted string riff that's more catchy than Step's. Bukem and Marky are amongst a long list of DJs supporting this one.

7 Crystal Clear - No Sell Out / Reactivate - Sonix

Crystal Clear pick up momentum with releases lined up on a few labels. 'No Sell Out' drops into a heavy bass assault alongside firing beats and a wicked "no sell out" vocal. 'Reactivate' rolls on a reece style bass riff that switches into a down stepping bounce line, and stepping beats with percussion layered on top.

7 M.I.S.T & High Contrast - Do It - Soul;R

Label bosses MIST hook up with the welsh wonderkid for some soulful DnB. 'Do It' runs with a House style male vox on a kind of '3am' tip but more chilled. SKC & Bratwa take care of the flip which rolls with some nice bongo beats, some ethnic wailings and deep bass. A couple of nice soulful tracks.

9 Future Prophecies – Magnetic/Black Dragon – Subtitles

Heavy, f*ckin heavy! 'Magnetic' starts off with sinister organs before it drops into the break where stabbing synth licks roll in. The drop is just pure nasty with a tearing reece bass that flys in with some hard stepping beats. The synth and organ riffs roll in and out nicely, giving the tune some wicked atmosphere. 'Black Dragon' has got a haunting female vocal before dropping into some well executed tech-step. This is F.P. at their best, buy it.

7 DJ Mosus & Kiljoy – I Like It Ruff (Bailey rmx) – Subtronix

Bailey steps up, and as you'd expect this one's no holds barred! Manic breaks fly over some thick bass stabs, the quality "I like it ruff" sample, and heavy subs. Mosus' heavy bass steppa 'Platoon' is on the flip. Also look out for Craze's rmx of the title track.

8 K Step - Velvet Lounge - Sudden Def

East London's Sudden Def has been a hotbed of new talent since launching back in '02. Stateside signing K-Step returns from successes on Gain, Outbreak and Muzica with a mainplay purpose built for Fabio, where filtered synths trigger ubiquitous brass samples and a picked guitar solo. Turn over for a tougher offering - all hammer horror atmospheres and a demonic howl of back end.

7 Kontrol - Deeper Meaning - Tech Itch

Kontrol has started to pick up momentum with releases on Metalheadz and 31 Records. 'Deeper Meaning' hammers breaks at you alongside nasty deep subs and slicing stabs. 'Look Inside' on the flip uses choppy beats and a bass to match. If you like your Drum n Bass hard hitting you should check this one out.

8 Skyver & DJon - Beastie General - Technique

Australian signings touch down on Drumsound & Bassline's Technique with some heavy dancefloor vibes. 'Beastie General' builds with an ominous intro before dropping into an attack of bass topped with metallic rolling beats, and some subtle stabs that keep this track moving along. Dancefloor destruction on both sides.

8 Drumsound & Bassline Smith - Reverance - TOV

'Reverance' has a quality intro, splicing up 'The Omen' theme music and a short MC sample. The drop is heavy with sub and reece combined, alongside rattling beats, to guarantee destruction on any dancefloor. The flip is on a similar tip with more subs and heavy EQing. Also look out for Hold Tight's 'Black Magic'.

8 Total Science - Quicksilver / Mount Fathead - TOV

Oxford don's step onto TOV for some dancefloor madness. 'Quicksilver' uses old school samples, cutting stabs, firing beats and a wicked Apocalypse Now "Everytime I think I'm gonna wake up back in the jungle" sample. 'Mount Fathead' rolls on a fat rounded bass line, tidy beats and nice bleeps over the top. The flip is the one for me, but both are well produced tracks.

8 Pascal Presents – 'The Playaz Lounge EP' – True Playaz

This double pack kicks off with Moving Fusions remix of Pascal's massive 'P Funk'. The 2004 update sticks close to the original, giving it a slightly more edgy feel. MC Fats adds vocals on two tracks, 'Dig Deep' and 'Bounce It'. The former is a grimey bass heavy cut with crisp beats, and a wicked Fats vox. The latter lives up to its name with a big bouncy bass line. 'Hustler' is a quality tune that flows along nicely with a deep rolling bass line and atmospheric synths, and shows why Pascal has consistently been a force within the scene.

8 Nightawalker - Head Nod / Suspense - True Playaz

Nightwalker is a name that there's no escaping from at the moment. 'Head Nod' drops from a classical riff in the break into a punchy bass assault, with stepping beats and a quality synth line. 'Suspense' is another bassline onslaught with edgy beats, and some tidy frequencies. If you like bass driven dancefloor madness, you can do a lot worse than this.

9 Dillinja - In The Grind / Acid Trak (Lemon D rmx) - Valve

Heavy, heavy track!! 'In the Grind' fires on all cylinders. The beats are crashing and manic, and alongside a simple pitched bass riff there's nowhere to hide! Perfect for rewind, cos the hands in the air intro makes the drop even more savage. 'Acid Trak' has got to be one of Dillinja's finest moments, so there was a lot of pressure on Lemon to come up with the goods, and he's done a bang up job, keeping the familiar bass line, but it giving it a bit more kick (if that's possible!) for 2004. The drums are more manic, but overall the vibe has been maintained, making this one of 2004's best re-rubs! Killer!! Also check for the massive 'All The Things'.

8 Futurebound - Blind Cobbler's Thumb (Baron rmx) - Viper

After the massive 'Nosher' remix it doesn't look like the Oxford lad's phone has stopped ringing with remix requests. 'Blind Cobbler's Thumb' is a tidy remix with crisp beats, and a thick bass line that Baron seems to have perfected. It rolls along nicely with some rising tops. Apart from that though, it is a strong release.

7 Kelis – Trick Me (Artificial Intelligence Remix) – Virgin

RnB's hottest property gets rubbed up the London way, courtesy of Artificial Intelligence. I'm feeling the original, and with this remix A.I seem to have used the right elements. The bass is deep and funky, the guitar riff runs through, and the chorus vocal is looped nicely. For the summer vibes this ones a tidy little piece that should put a smile on ya face.

9 Ed Rush & Optical - KerbKrawler/Compound rmxs - Virus

The original 'KerbKrawler' is one of my favourite Virus tunes, so I was well interested to see how this one was gonna turn out. Baron has pulled off this mix with a lot of class, maintaining the original b-line that made the track so potent, and giving it a few tweaks. This remix is a good fusion of Baron's style and the originals vibe. 'Compound' remix is another strong re-rub, courtesy of San Fran's Gridlock. Rolling synths, tight percussion, and simple stabs are at the core this remix, making this 12" a strong double sider.

8 Drumsound & Bassline Smith - Quicktime - W.A.R.

Here comes the latest on their own imprint from the pair that gave us the killer that is 'Odyssey'. 'Quicktime' is a funk led track with razor beats and a disco bass riff. The flip rolls out the summer vibes with wicked guitar licks, female vox and a deep bass that sits nicely under the tidy beats. Pure sunshine vibes, and lovin it!

7 XRS - Crowds in Clouds / Cold Hands - Wildstyle

Brazilian bad man jumps onto Wildchild's imprint. 'Crowds In The Clouds' bubbles along nicely with intricate beats, a subtle rolling bass line and some soft acidic touches. 'Cold Hands' is on a similar high energy vibe with some quality organ chords, a bassline that shifts upwards and rattling beats. Both tunes are well produced and run on the energetic and melodic philosophy that the Brazilians have taken to heart.

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NEWS

Doom 3
Watch out for the hot new version of Doom, console exclusive for Xbox, DOOM 3 is being touted as 'the most terrifying and gripping 3-D gaming experience ever created'. Built on a revolutionary new 3-D graphics engine; it should be looking sick as you battle the forces of Hell alone or cooperatively on Xbox Live.

Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas
Some info about the follow up to the absolutely killer Vice City are starting to filter out and its sounds absolutely sick. It's gonna be based loosely around gang culture in LA around the early nineties; with a definite hip-hop gangster feel and some serious improvements on the last GTA. For a start the map will be three times as big, divided into 3 cities; with much more detailed interaction where you will be able to go into many more buildings including robbing houses, gambling in casino's, building your own properties, eating in various restaurants, going to the gym as well even more freedom in building up your crime empire. Also on this tip there is a new contender to the GTA throne '25 to Life' which is a similarly ghetto based rob'em up but with the exciting twist that you will be able to battle it out with 15 other thugged out bad-boys online for control of the hood. If it plays well and works online it could be absolutely huge.

Handheld Gaming Steps Up A Gear
The gauntlet had been laid down it's Nintendo vs Sony; Nintendo have maintained a reasonable level of control over the handheld gaming market through the various incarnations of the Gameboy, but Sony have stepped into the market with a serious, serious contender in the form of the PSP. The PSP is not quite as powerful as a PS2 but more powerful than a Playstation and it has a 4 and half inch screen! They are also pitching it as multi-purpose as you will be able to plug in a keyboard and digital camera, as well as a built in wireless LAN connection. Nintendo are not taking it lying down either and are coming with a powerful 2 screen version of the gameboy, with touch screen interaction, and somewhere in between the N64 and the Game Cube. The fight is on!

Forza Motorsport
A hot brand new racing game coming to X-Box and X-box live is Forza Motorsport; hotly touted as the next big thing in driving games it features numerous upgrades to keep the maxpower types happy, as well as a range of tracks, loads of cars including Porsche's, Merc's, Ferrari's, Bimma's, etc. I haven't actually seen it in action but the screenshots and the hype is that this will be one of the best looking and accurately simulated games ever!

Halo 2
The much awaited and much postponed sequel to possibly the greatest game ever has been given a definitive release date of November 9th this year. The basic plot is that the war has come to earth and only MasterChief can save humanity; but for those of us smart enough to be on Xbox Live it's the online multiplayer battle that's really going to be the one. Halo was probably the most advanced game so far and Halo 2 is supposedly going to push the boundaries even further. SO enough of the hype... bring on the action.

BT Openworld
The lovely people at BT Openworld are from this issue sponsoring the ATM gaming section; so we are now fully online; if you want to come and check us online my gamertag is 'Holdtight Killa' and I can regularly be found poppin caps in Rainbow Six 3 or rippin up the course on Rallisport 2 and very occasionally gracing the court on Topspin. Don't be shy...

REVIEWS

Rallisport Challenge 2 (X-Box)
Without a doubt the best racing game I've seen in quite some time; and definitely a contender against Project Gotham 2 for the best driving game out there. As the title suggests this is more rally orientated than street racing; with lots of handbrake turns and hardcore off road racing to keep the action fast and furious. There is also a nice variation of racing types with standard rally, hill-climbs, rallycross, ice –racing and crossover formats to race in, which like Project Gotham means that there is plenty to keep you interested. Rallisport 2 is also online for those of you who are wise enough to have invested in broadband internet; and racing against up to 15 other drivers is seriously good fun; and there is also a online scoreboard for the fastest track times. There are lots of good features in this well thought out game; however what particularly grabbed me is that this game really encourages you to go for it; where in many racing games the best way to drive is with strict discipline, in Rallisport 2 you just want to put your foot down and drive to the limits. I've had hours of fun on this one and would go as far as to say this is possibly the best racing game ever!
Darkness: 1/10
Sampleability: 4/10
Playability: 9/10
Overall: 9/10

Ninja Gaiden
For those that remember the original Ninja Gaiden from back in the day; I'm sure you were as excited as me to hear they were breathing life into the game once again. However, this is very different to the original, as you might expect they have gone 3D and made it way more complicated with more role play elements from the original slash 'em up. This game looks great, plays very fluidly and you have a massive array of heavyweight ninja moves to choose from as well as endless collectable weapons and power-ups. One of the most striking features is how massive the game is with it taking a minimum of about 40 hrs to complete it, and that's knowing what you're doing and where you're going! You will find that this game lasts you a long time as not only is it big, but it's rock hard; with hordes of cannon fodder to get through and some serious and imaginative end of level bosses to defeat. This is a very good platform/action game although I have to say it didn't fully light my fire; it is certainly the most advanced game of its type but the playability wasn't quite as killer as it could have been. Definitely worth a buy though...
Darkness: 9/10
Sampleability: 8/10
Playability: 8/10
Overall: 8/10

Mashed (X-box /PS2)
This game was a refreshing change when it dropped through the door, as for me this is a bit of blast back to the golden age of computer games, where playability was by far the most important factor. So many of the games we get through for review look great and have amazing CGI intro's and glitzy menu's but when you get into the game, its just boring. Mashed is a little bit different; the graphics are solid and fluid but nothing spectacular; instead they've spent the time developing the gameplay; and let me tell you they definitely did a good job. This game is seriously addictive; you just can't put it down. For older heads it's like an up-to-date version of RC Pro AM; it basically racing small cars round a track with a wide range of power-ups to blow each other up with. There are numerous different ways of playing the game, and loads of different courses to choose from; it's the kind of game you could spend all evening on with a few mates mashing each other up, and the compulsory trashtalking. Unfortunately they didn't make this game online compatible, but it is four player; and is probably one of the best four player (on one console) X-Box games available.
Darkness: 2/10
Sampleability: 0/10
Playability: 10/10
Overall: 9/10

Hitman: Contracts
The third in the series of Hitman games, this is probably the best one yet although it is very similar to the previous edition in gameplay and levels. Contracts basically looks darker and has an even moodier feel to it than its predecessors, with even more grizzly kills and some seriously dark levels; there is one particularly dark level that's a rave in a meat packing plant, making Stratford Rex look like a holiday home. Although having said this, some of the levels are re-hashed versions of levels from the previous Hitman games, so if you've clocked the previous 2 already I don't know how much you're really going to enjoy going over it again. Essentially this is a very playable and very dark stealth game; with lots of killing and a heavyweight conspiracy style plot. You can try and blaze through levels without any sneaking but it becomes much harder this way; it's one of those games where patience and cunning is largely rewarded. However you can spend ages stealthing through a level just to be spotted for no apparent reason; which suddenly makes it into a very fustrating game. Hitman Contracts is solid but not terribly imaginative; if you like the previous version, or enjoy stealth killing games then this is definitely for you.
Darkness: 9/10
Sampleability: 7/10
Playability: 8/10
Overall: 8/10

THE HITMAN COMPETITION:

To win a copy of Hitman:Contracts for X Box & an amazing Hitman:Contracts watch, just answer the following question by e-mail and send to: gaming@atm-mag.com

Which French hitman shares the same name as a Seat car, features in a film with Gary Oldman, and the character in the Hitman games is based upon?

blunted beat reviews

compiled by SOTO & Kingsley Marshall

Swayzak

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Wren

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Breaks

V/A - Fabric Live 16: Adam Freeland - Fabric

The next installment in the ever expanding Fabric series of mix compilations sees Mr. Freeland step up and do what he does best; Long deep mixes with a maturity and subtlety that are punctuated with moments of sublime music. If you've been familiar with recent Evil Nine / Freeland / Marine Parade offerings, (and liked them), then you'll probably enjoy this. Like we mentioned, it's a more restrained sound, but certainly no worse for it. There's a fair bit of guitars, which we're certainly fans of, especially when they work so well in alot of the tracks on here. It's a progressive, electronic / band hybrid with lots of solid, chugging, stomping beats (and the occasional electro-esque gem; Justice vs Gambit, Radioactive Man) that keep driving on through the album. There's also an appearance by a certain Mr. Ian Brown which defo gets the thumbs up, and unfortunately the obligatory couple of dodgy tracks, but don't let that put you off. It's certainly something you should listen to and even buy! (3.5/5) SOTO

Freestylers - Raw as F**k - Against The Grain

This is the third album from the 'Stylers and it will come as no surprise that it moves around quite a bit. Which is handy really, what with albums full of variations on the same tune being rather tiresome. This, thankfully, is not one of those. There's plenty you might recognise from the last year or so that have already been released, raved to and written about; Punks, Slammer, etc. There's a heavy old-school electro and hip hop influence throughout without it descending into parody and there's the superb 'Push Up', which is all eighties-synth-electro-Prince-pop and must be one of the best things the Freestylers have ever done. Don't get us wrong, we love the heavier side of things as much as anyone, but such out and out pop crossover is only to be applauded. (It sounds refreshing on the radio in the middle of the day too!). Surely worth a listen. (3.5/5) SOTO

Ferry Corsten - It's Time - Positiva

Well it seems that the whole electro thing is infiltrating every genre at the moment. Here we have progressive / trance type, Ferry Corsten, turning in a rather splendid slice of electro with just a hint of trance, (actually in a good way that definitely works with this track). It's a very warm record and sounds lush very loud with it's all-embracing chords and sizeable cushion of soft bass flowing around you like something bassy and flowing! There's also a decent Luke Slater remix, but make sure you check out Ferry's dub mix. (4/5) SOTO

Superstyle Deluxe - Dancefloor Superstars - Muto

Don't know if you're aware of SSD, but you should be! We first took notice last year and, after recieving a couple more promos, we were hooked. Their unmistakeable sound is a hybrid of breaks, house and electro, done with such style you couldn't fail to like. The title tack features the MC talent of Chickaboo - you'll most probably have heard her vocal stylings on '2 Freaks' last year. There's also a Capoeira Twins remix as well that takes a more linear approach. 'Beanfeast' is the standout here though. Thoroughly cheeky throughout and full of sexy synth funk and displaying SSD's awesome ability to be tough and funky and housey and breaksy and electroey all at once! (5/5) Recommended SOTO

Nectarious - Phoenix / Humming - Streetwise

Two separate releases here on Streetwise, which is shaping up to be a very strong label, what with (probably) the most played breaks track of last year; 'Emit', and their continuing output of quality tracks. Fans of driving electro-breaks are going to be very happy with 'Pheonix'. Toughening up the arpeggiated bassline idea, applying some 'controlled distortion' and really just taking a simple pattern and making it really work. Also 'Humming' is well worth checking out; still has touches of electro but with a funkier, housier edge, but just as good. A very promising prospect for the future wethinks! (4.5/5) SOTO

Koma & Bones - Take Me Back (rmxs) - TCR

K&B reappear and deliver a single of remixes taken from their most recent album. "Take me Back" was one of the stand-out tracks, and featured the legendary Robert Owens.
K&B turn in more of a re-work than a remix, but that's not to say it ain't a blinder. What you get is a typical treatment; it's long and drawn out but in that way only they seem to be able to get away with. Full on, yet restrained and holding back until at least 1/2 way through and then letting rip with a signature electro-tech-breaks bassline workout that will have everyone moving. There is also a BLIM remix here which certainly delivers, but not quite as much as the K & B offering. Class. (5/5) SOTO

Aquasky vs M.blaster - Wheels of Steel - Passenger

The runaway train that is the Aquasky phenomenon continues at full steam on their quest to release a record every, ooh?, 10 minutes or so! (Without sacrificing quality of course). Another surefire dancefloor bomb that veers towards the old-school, injects a touch of hip-hop and 'takes it to the floor'. (My, what clever use of an old Aquasky title to describe a new one!) What you get here is 2 more high quality Aquasky tunes that do what they always do; ie. Make people dance when you want them to! (3.5/5) SOTO

Jason Sparks - Don't I Feel - Passenger

The electro revolution continues, with the Lawgiverz cutting much of Pauline Taylor's song in favour of a stuttering instrumental mix with its eyes firmly on the lino prize. SOTO are more sympathetic, but again hammer home the B-Boy elements with a straight up and down drum machine work out which trades blows with drunken keys. (KM)

Blend Crafters - Lola - Genuine

Damn this track is funky. Jurassic Five's Nu-Mark shakes the loops from his crates with the kind of blind siding certainly that sends a shiver down the spine. Tighter than James Brown's ensemble in the days of the hundred dollar fines, and quick as a PCP addled gunfighter, it's only the 60s garage of Unwind which brings this baby down. Superfly. (KM)

Jentina - Bad Ass Stripper - Virgin

Jentina's home grown jeep beats are certain to be shakka, shakka, shaking hot hatches right across the country shakka, shakka shortly. If the shimmering percussion and 19" sub woofing bass sweep of her debut don't do it, then the O'Jay's sample is sure to suck you in. Haven't got a monkey's what she's on about mind - something about champagne, trucks, thongs and false tan. (KM)

Leftfield

Spectrum 311 - Lying Eyes - 162A Records

Callum Johnston drip-feeds Specials sensibilities into a spectacularly grimy Massive-esque groove, fleshing out a grumbling ska skank with sleepy scratchadelica and his own rumbling vocal, which speaks absent-mindedly of feminine betrayal. This'll creep into your consciousness – expect big things. (KM)

Husky Rescue - City Lights - Catskills

If, like me, you are a sucker for both slide guitar and slightly stilted Nordic vocals, you'll fall for Marko Nyberg's debut for Brighton's favourite felines within the first few seconds. Indeed, it's the dichotomy between Nyberg's combination of snowflake frailty with an almost tex-mex appreciation of wide open acoustic space which sets Husky Rescue apart from their contemporaries. Frosty. (KM)

Wren - Drive Down Lines - Melodic

Despite boasting a roaster featuring such twitching notables as Pedro and Minotaur Shock, Dave Cooper readily admits that he was loathe to let Wren pass him by. Nick Peill's debut harmonises layered vocals into a shimmying sixties backing, replete with strummed bass guitar and a plentiful helping of synth rock. Think Tortoise sharing a hot spring with Manitoba's Dan Snaith and Phil Spectre. (KM)

The Go! Team - Power is On - Memphis Industries

The second single from the latest signing to the Jacob's brother's ludicrously superb imprint again succeeds in capturing pure lightning in a bottle. This latest work conjures images of a cheerleading team locked in an examination room at MIT with only a piano, drum kit and box of ludicrous strength super-weed for company. Pure energy – get some lucozade and pro-plus in for any chance of keeping up with the forthcoming album. (KM)

The Orb - Aftermath - Cooking Vinyl

Undoubtedly the choice cut from Alex Paterson's soon-come return to longplayer form, Bicycles and Tricycles. Scottish MC Soom-T's lyric proves a crisp counter to The Orb's expected watery groove, but it's the combination of this with the to and fro of sly hip hop patterns and vaporous ambience, which causes the spine to shiver. (KM)

Swayzal - Keep It Coming - K7

More than a hint of Underworld in this first taster from James Taylor, Kenny Paterson and Dave Brown's forthcoming fourth full-length for K7, the vocal slipping over already elastic grooves which stretch in and out of focus as the track progresses. (KM)

Karsten Pflum - Dogcatcher EP - Tendertonic Audio

Operating somewhere in the netherworld which separates traditional breakbeat from west London's broken cousin and the early nineties ambience of Namlook, Aphex et al, Jacob Madsen has proved himself something of a sonic explorer, with the five tracks captured here twisting from junglist pressures to a more Plaid-like rough and tumble. (KM)

Mike Ladd - Housewives at Play - K7

Sometime Infesticon Mike Ladd drops the first taste of his third solo album. This truly post-modern mish-mash up, rides a peculiar blend of Big Apple sadomasochistic dungeon disco and majestic hip hop glitz, a shot of guitar wielding purple funkateering thrown into the title track for good measure. (KM)

Zero 7 - Somersault - Ultimate Dilemma

The stand out from Zero 7's phenomenally successful second album, sets Sia's sleepy eyed vocals adrift over a fret squeaking haze of acoustic guitar strum, slippery strings and unforgettable Rhodes – all of which serves to underline the Zero's place as essential chill masters of 2004. (KM)

Grand National - Cherry Tree - Sunday Best

The second single to be taken from Lawrence Rudd and Robert Lyddon's magnificent album, "Kicking the National Habit," is unashamedly refreshing. While the percussion takes its calibration from a mid-eighties Lilt advert, the chorus is pure pop genius, all strumming guitars and closely harmonised songs of summer loving. Two bonus tracks generously reignite Beach Boys joy with Joy Division introspection – sand between the toes fun. (KM)

To Rococo Rot - Cosimo - Domino

To Rococo Rot perfected their shadowy, blink and you miss it electronica some time ago, here shaking down the thumping "Cosima" with the decidedly gentler title track – all simmering motor city touches and low end warmth. Turn over for a three track trip from the paper thin delicacy of Hotel Morgan, through pulsating Days and out into the fluttering sunshine of "Gelb." (KM)

RSL - The Mast - Players

Familiar to followers of Giles Peterson's Worldwide show, RSL's Mast is big in every sense of the word, Julie E. Gordon sings her lungs out to a delicious brass arrangement and lashings of vintage keys. Hard to summarises in a single sentence, but best described as Cinematic Orchestra's Jay Swinscoe performing in an uptown New York disco, on a double dose of valium. (KM)

The Concretes - Can't Hurry Love - Licking Fingers

Banish dreaded thoughts of Supreme's covers; this single sees cheeky Scandinavian scamps The Concrete's turn out a second slice of something new. High concept in the way only a Swedish eight-piece could deliver, the title track is a two minute pop gem – a trumpet punctuated wall of sound topped with its own saucy Supreme - singer Victoria Bergsman. (KM)

Malkin Zany - Driva Man - April

Denmark four-piece Malkin Zany provide an outer space break two piece, stringing out Coleman Hawkins original over well-paced percussion, bluesy keywork, and a searingly hot horn section. Vocalist Deborah Herbert provides the necessary lyrical growl, as Djos Krost turn their mix to the echo boxes. (KM)

Butch Cassidy - Hear what I Say EP - Fenetik

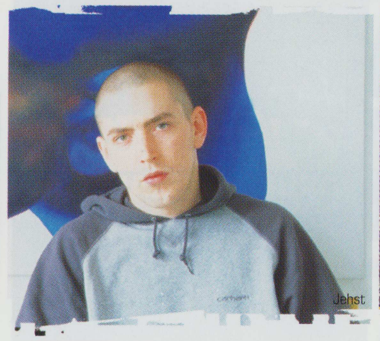
Soma's subsidiary continue to blur the boundaries, Michael Hunter donning his Butch Cassidy alter ego for a summery skank through a roots riddled record collection. The title track sounds as authentic as the pre-torn sleeve art presumes, its echoing dubs and lazy key work a nodding homage to Junior Byles' 70s original. Turn over for a more contemporary offering, where laser blips pick their way through a grimy jeep beat. (KM)

hip hop reviews

compiled by Jesse Keene, Pager, Sireman

Tajai

Example


Jehst

Infinite Lives

Infinite Lives - Bush Meat - Big Dada

After a listen to the latest offering from this verbal innovator of the UK underground you will either be left strangely affected or strangely offended. The album is a vibrant mix of comedy, squelchy beats and witty rhymes. Infinite lives does not give the impression he does things by half measures so you're met with is tracks like The Incredible Lactating Man which deals with the every day trauma of a man struck down with such an affliction, I think you're getting my drift. Though with that said this is not to be dismissed as a comedy album there are some well thought out tunes and production on this album which gives you the feeling of a refreshing sound that notes the ever growing confidence and diversity of UK talent. My advice is to go hunting for the Bush Meat soon as you can, it's got a potent flavour.

Third Unheard - Conneticut Hip Hop '79-'83 - Stones Throw

You may be forgiven for the fact that you might not have heard of any of the artists featured on this album due to the fact that some of us were not even born when these tracks were released. Nevertheless you can regard this as a 1st rate lesson in the old skool sound which paved the way for so many up and coming and now established artists. The album itself is a compilation of Mc's and crews of the time with kazoos aplenty. It's a trip down memory lane and is stacked with variations/dubplates of your favourite floor fillers from a golden era in Hip-Hop. If you are looking for something with that old skool flavour then look no further than this small yet complete slice of hip hop history.

Charizma & PBW - Big Shots - Stones Throw

I don't think that the aforementioned duo will need much of an intro but just in case here is a tiny recap. Peanut Butter Wolf is probably one of the best known and loved producers/DJ in this era of Hip-Hop. He is a man of humble beginnings who at one point was part of a 2 man crew, one mc one DJ, the Mc in question is Charizma a quick-witted lyrical genius who was tragically cut down in his prime. This album is a testimony to the friendship the 2 shared and the raw hip hop beats and rhymes that they created. The album itself never lets up pace from start to end, lyrically Charizma smashes it while PB Wolf supplies the funky beats. Solid Hip-Hop with a deep undertone, absolute class…

Bus Driver - Cosmic Cleavage - Big Dada

Ok, to say this release is slightly off centre would be an understatement, but (and there is a big but here) this is an extremely varied and interesting album. BusDriver lyrically is quite an enigma, an on-beat off-beat/harmonious style is the loosest and best explanation that I can give, although don't be fooled by complexity this is stella stuff like. Daddy Kev supplies the beats and for those that don't know these are some weird old beats but he makes them damn funky that's for sure. I personally rate the album on a whole. It's a refreshing sound and has elements of comedy, social comment, and straight up lunacy. If you are looking for something that's a little different then get a look at BusDrivers Cosmic Cleavage it's a proper corker.

Tajai - Power Movement - Hiero Emporium

This is a well-crafted debut solo album from Souls of Mischief's veteran mc. lyrically and production wise fresh sounding quality material. Tajai lyrically deals with subject matter that effects us all from social comment through to getting wasted and the general vibe to the album is up tempo with the theme heavyly centered on empowerment of the people. Beatwise he has chosen to work with different producers on this as opposed to the usual suspects from the Hiero stable. This you can take as a plus or a minus, in my opinion this is a + and makes for a good album that may need a little time to grow on you but once it has you be glad you added it to your crate. This is a power movement in the right direction and could well be a taste of some big things to come…

Indelible DVD Magazine - Issue #3

Available Now from selected record shops and outlets.. Ok, as you may have gathered this is instalment number 3 in on going Hip Hop dvd magazine project called Indelible. And let me just say that after you get your hands on a copy of this I guarantee you will be hooked. First of all there are features on DJ IQ, Slum Village, Kool Keith, The Scratch Perverts. Not only that but there're also pieces on The Battle of the Year where you get to see what can only be described as some incredible displays of break dancing and a section where you get to go covert with Mace (one of the finest graf writers to span a decade). It's all here and more. The main point that I will raise is that it is a vast improvement production wise on the 1st and 2nd issues. The filming has come on immensely and the sections are seamless and well put together. There are plenty of extra features and bonus sections so you do not get the feeling of a lack of content. In fact you can tell that the boys have been working damn hard at the Indelible studios to bring us a complete and convincing hip hop package with all the trimmings, not only for our ears but for our eyes to digest as well. Get yer hands on a copy as soon as you can, then keep em peeled for issue 4 as this is quality controlled material that seems to getting better with every serving!!!...
DVD Contents. Main sections: Battle Of The Year, Slum Village, DJ IQ, Mace, Kool Keith. Other Sections Include: Breeze Everflowin, Adam Brown, 42 Crew, Fallacy, J-Zone, Ty + Zion, The Scratch Pereverts, Plus much, much more!!!!

Example - A Pointless Song - All The Chats

Only a British hip hop hero would pride themselves on the implosive self depreciation of writing a lyric about their own inability to write a lyric. If all this is too introspective for its own good, skip the self explanatory Pointless Song, for the strung out call and response of "Who's Ready?" which scores extra points for rhyming "curriculum" with "tickle them" – wooh hah! (KM)

Mike Ladd - Nostalgialator - K7

Mike Ladds new album has a very funny name don't you reckon? I can't even pronounce it! This kind of carries over into the actual music I'm not sure I understand that either. Not for the want of trying but I am finding it very hard to put it in a bracket, a genre even a pigeonhole. I know I shouldn't be looking to do this but I am really not in the mood to write loads about crazy experimental leftfield hip hop tonight. So I won't, suffice to say if you like your hip hop punked up electro clashed with a few timely guitars that also includes a bit of voxed up singing, garage punk drums, space rap phaser noises and I'm sure keyboards that have knobs on them that you can really twist up in a stylised handbag house kind of way. This is the album for you. If your not digging that scene steer clear.

Sabac - Sabacolypse/Change Gon' Come - Psycho Logical

As an MC Sabacs delivery is nice. He leans very much towards Ghostface in his verbal tone probably due to the fact they are both from NYC. The raps are punchy and to the point, the delivery is gruff and works well against Necros simplistic production. The LP is over 20 odd tracks long (yawn) so you will get bored with both MC and production, however there is no doubting Sabac is the most competent of the Non Phixion MC's, I guess the real question is if you think that NP are competent I don't and neither most probably do you.

Bigg Juss - Black Mama Serums - Big Dada

Bigg Juss used to be in Company Flo, (whom we all loved, although we did not really know what they were going on about) there's no doubt Co Flow were the shit for a period in the late 90's and the debut Funcrusher Plus is a classic LP. Now he's back on his own with out the big ginger fellow. So here we are Black Mamba Serums, ladies and gents I can now officially let you all know that BJ has lost his marbles, as on a first take this is unlistenable, but hold on, no I must be wrong! Let me listen again, yes I hear a steel drum, I hear broken jazz piano loops I hear…I hear different new music, I'm touched by the lyrics I see the hip hop metaphor as an art form, I see the subtleties of the samples, balls no I don't where's that Clipse CD.

Blendcrafters - Lola / Unwind - Genuine

A 7" brought to you by I think DJ Numark from J5 he's also a long with someone else is a Blendcrafter. Sorry to be vague but I've lost the press release. Anyway it's very boring a kind of funk driven loop record that sounds like it could have been a La Funk Mob demo. But I like Nu Marks album "Hands On" so I'm not gonna go off on one. In fact I'd just go and buy that you get 21 more tracks and they are a damn sight better than these to donuts.

Beyond There ft Arcee, Yungun & Jehst - Theme / Slumber

This 12" bounces along very slowly, which is ok, in fact it's quite nice. The track Slumber also features the newish London MC Yungun whom I believe is a very nice chap. Its not gonna break any boundaries but who cares when Yung finishes, Jehst comes in so whoop de do, cant go wrong really. The records a bit like Ronseal does exactly what is says on the tin.

Foreign Beggars - Hold On - Dented

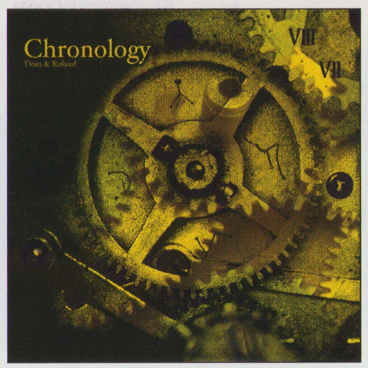
The FB's are doing it for themselves, which is most definitely the way to go these days. Two more tracks from producer Dag Nabbit and lead rapper Orifice Vulgatron will continue the FB's rise on the underground scene. However its East London vocalist DVS that steels the show with his exquisite hook on the Skinnyman track Hold On. I suggest you hold on for DVS as he's sure to be a man to watch.

Yungun - The Essence - Janomi Records

Yungun aka 'Essa' aka 'Chef YG' aka 'Nico Suave' drops his first full-length release 'The Essance'. Yungun has been popping up with various 12"s and features over the past few years and always manages to deliver the goods. 'The Essance' is more of a collection of these 12"s and collaborations with various top MC's and producers such as Kyza, Doc Brown, Evil Ed, Harry Love and Mr Thing.
If you are a Yungun fan then you will already have a majority of the tracks like the smooth, laid-back "City Breaks" (LG and Lopez production) or the bouncy 'Dancing Shoes' (Courtesy of Mr Thing's fine drum programming) but there is a hidden gem on this CD, the Harry Love produced 'Liquid Love', be sure to check - pure dopeness. All in all 'The Essance' is 12 Tracks deep and a mighty fine listen. With numerous new 12"s out and a new album planned,the future looks all good, YG is everywhere at the moment and rightfully so.

Jaylib - McNasty Filth - Stones Throw Records

The untouchable duo Jaydee and Madlib AKA Jaylib release 'Mcnasty Filth' the third 12" off the excellent 'Champion Sound' LP. This moody stomping track featuring Frank n Dank is another essential for the record crate (be sure to check for the video for this track soon). On the flipside is a previously unreleased track, 'Pillz' produced by J-Dilla, which makes for a very tasty B-side indeed, Hip Hop's finest duo of 2004 get more respect, pick it up!



drum & bass

➲ v/a - months exposed (gen dub)

months / formation 7

After the popular series of 12's carrying nothing but a month of the year stamped on 'em, Formation spill the beans to the culprits behind each track. There's no surprise's to see that Formation top boy Twisted, and the new-school Zen and Generation Dub are the men behind the masks. If you liked then vinyl then your gonna enjoy this, if you didn't you won't! The Geordie lads mixing is tight, and the tracks roll in and out quick enough, and although this is a good enough representation of the prolific label's sound, I couldn't help but get a bit bored of hearing similar bass lines and beats through-out.

➲ fabio & grooverider - d&b arena

react records 7

The Drum n Bass Arena series rolls on. Fabio and Grooverider have never produced a mix CD together in all their years at the top of the game, so this project was about f**kin time!! Both DJ's get a CD to themselves to flex their different styles. Fabio kicks off his soulful session with a quality Allied Forces track called 'Gather Round'. The set continues to glide effortlessly from track to track and incorporates a good mix of upfront and released tunes. Standout tracks include Ill Logic & Raf's quality 'Could It Be', High Contrast's 'Racing Green' and Nu:tone's class 'Strictly Social' remix, to name but a few. The vibe is soulful on this one, but does get heavier at times with tracks like 'So Vain' by Breakage or A-Sides new Valve dub 'Exodus' before finishing off with Calibre's epic mix of Jaheim's 'Put Your Woman First'.

Rider launches into an attack with a fresh Dillinja cut, 'Feel My Pain' which sets the vibe for the rest of this side. The tune selection is upfront with anthems like Zinc's 'Ska rmx' and Fresh's 'Tombraider' sitting alongside dubs like 'In The Grind' by Dillinja, or Rider's 'Stone Killa' under the Codename John alias. The mixing is what you'd expect from Grooverider if you've heard him out recently, keeping things moving and heavy. Having one liquid and the other dancefloor works well, and it's baffling why these two have never produced something like this before.

➲ dillinja - my sound

valve records 9

This man's been killing sound systems for over a decade now and this CD is a testament to that. The intro rolls in with Dillinja shoutin "2004 and still doin this fuckin thing, I love it! I love it from my fuckin heart!". Holding back ain't really Dillinja's style, and this shines through in the 14 tracks that are a cross section of his bass heavy career.

If you don't know Dillinja's early tunes then this is well worth the purchase. The CD features early smashers like 'Sovereign Melody' which shot him to fame in '93, 'The Angels Fell' from Metalheadz in '95, and 'Muthafucka' which was released on the infamous Philly Blunt. My all time favourite Dillinja tune 'Acid Trak' is on there next to forthcomings like 'In The Grind' and 'Rainforest'. The future tracks are wicked but for me it's the classics which make this well worth the buy. 'My Sound' is trip down a hazy memory lane for those in the know, and for those that don't, a much needed history lesson.

➲ dom & roland - chronology

moving shadow 8

Dom & Roland step up with his eagerly awaited third artist album, 'Chronology' which is released on a 4 bit vinyl pack and an 11 track CD. The album rolls in with the Detroit sounds of 'Ethnicity' before launching into the heavy hitting 'Just So You Know' with it's catchy title sample, firing breaks and nasty sub. 'I 4 An I' rolls with a dirty chopped reece, a ragga style vox, slicing stabs and heavy stepping beats. There's a couple of remixes on the album including the 'Moulin Rouge' remix from USA's finest, Diesel, Kaos and Karl K. The remix is a dirty affair, like the original, with rabid amens, a tidy sub-line and thick atmospherics.

'Break Out' is on a Leftfield vibe with minimal and deep drums, kind of like the track used on the Guinnes surf ad, and a string breakdown halfway through. 'Future Life' is trademark Dom with a heavy drop into a synth bass riff coupled with subs, alongside intricate drumwork. The Hive remix of 'Paradrenasite' is getting a lot of plays at the moment with it's twisted piano intro, that's laden with a haunting female vocal, before dropping into a heavy reece onslaught. 'Freak Seen' rolls with a touch more funk than most of the hard hitting album, as does the '10 hours late' intro before you get to the breakdown where it shifts into a bass driven steppa. Last up is the quality 'Dance All Night' which truly is Dom at his best. The album is a dirty ride through one of jungles original dark-siders, and trust me, fans won't be disappointed!

➲ shimon - ram raiders: the mix

ram records 8

The mighty Ram Records touch down with a mix after a hectic release schedule, featuring all the tracks off their new Raider volumes. Andy is undoubtedly the worlds best, but things are definitely rubbing off on Shimon. The mixing is tight as he quickly runs from one to the next, with some sick double drops, like Sub Focus' killer 'Strobe' into Fresh's 'Signal'. There's some Ram dubs in there like Andy & Shimon's 'Pimp Slap' and Shimon & Sonic's 'Hill Billy'. Shimon also drops some Ram favourites into the hotpot, like the classic 'Hush Hush', Dynamite collaboration 'Hotness' and the mighty 'Titan'.

With a lot of mix CDs out there at the moment this ones definitely worth a look at. Shimon keeps things tight and rolling, and the selection shows you why the Essex label has been sitting at the top table for a long time now.

➲ dynamite - world of dynamite

strong records 9

It's been a long wait for this one to drop. When 'Hotness' smashed clubs worldwide, and Dynamite dropped some sick rhymes for The Nextmen, you new the album was gonna be big! After troubles with Talkin' Loud, Dynamite decided to launch his own label 'Strong' for the release of his debut album. Too many producers to mention including Zinc, Skitz, Wookie, Marky & XRS and of course Roni. Guest vocals fly in courtesy of Elephant Man and the one like Skibadee.

The album is on a similar tip to Zinc's 'Faster', starting of Hip-Hop then moving into Breaks and Garage, and finishing off with Drum. The album really allows the Bristol MC to showcase his skills, showing why he's been smashing the UK Hip-Hop scene whilst still maintaining a place at the top table in DnB. Too many strong tracks to give them all credit, standout's include 'Marvellous' where Dynamite flexes 3 voices. Dynamite steps into the other side of the studio to produce under the 'D Muli' alias, and it works well, especially the track 'Visions' which features some deep chats on it alongside a quality 'Gloria Jones' sample. Stone from Stone Riddims comes in with some fresh production on 'Bubble' and 'Pressure'. Chaotic breaks in Zinc's 'Topped Up' run nicely along Dyna's quick time chats and Roni's 'Gold' skips along tightly with inane Busta Rhymes-style double time rapping on top. The range of chatting styles is phenomenal.

The one they're all talking about's 'The Scene/The Tribute' with Dyna name checking the who's who with some intricate rhymes and funny's. Gotta big up Dynamite on this, the man's been working hard and the commitment to the art of a mic shines through. Buy it!

➲ dieselboy - dungeonmasters guide

nettwerk / system 8

America's number one releases his 8th album, continuing the vibe of calling in talented producers for a lot of remix business. The tune selection is sticking to that techy rolling tip that the yanks can't get enough of, with producers like Teebee, Concord Dawn, Evol Intent and many more all involved. Always progressing Dieselboy brings in tracks from Tiesto, Sasha, Wink, and BT and hands them to dnb's finest to remix. It's a good concept that works, bringing in some new sounds to drum n bass, and giving the album a fresh and varied vibe. If you're feeling the progressive, techy side of drum n bass this one's well worth checking out. The mixing is tight, keeping things rolling along nicely, and shows why Dieselboy's got such a large following across the pond.

➲ john b - in:transit

beta recordings 8

Jungle's biggest eccentric presents his newest album, and you know this one's gonna be off the wall. The album promises Metalheadz-style tech-step smashers, epic trance inspired vocal tracks, and crazy electro porno step! It kicks in with 'Midnight Air' which is a trancey, 80's/electro sounding vocal track, that is kind of on a similar tip to Fresh's 'Submarine's' to put it close to something. The vocals on 'Take Me Home' is jokes, with Stareyes chatting about f*cking throughout. 'Mercury Skies' is a dark progressive track that combines some grit with trancey vocals and synths. There's a few tracks on there that you'll already know, like 'Sight Beyond 2004' which featured on the flip of 'Pressure 2004', or the infamous 'Rinse It Out Propa (aka Blandwagon Poos)'. There's some heavy tracks to remind you how fierce John can be, like the heavy stepping 'Broken Exile' which will be on one of the three 12" releases from the album. As far as a drum n bass album goes I think you'll be hard pushed to find anything that crosses boundaries like 'In:Transit' does, and one thing that shines through on this album is how talented and versatile Senor Juan B is. There's gonna be very mixed views on this, and to be honest it's hard to give this one a score. Whatever you think of some of it, it's worth listening to the whole album because there's a lot of different flavours in the pot.

➲ london elektricity - live gravy

hospital dvd 8

I reckon I'm the only junglist in the country who hasn't made it to a LE show! The group have embarked on a hectic tour covering many a city and country. The DVD includes footage from the tours with general Tomfoolery and Jungle Drummer abuse! There's some clips of other artists who joined them which are good, like SP's section to name one. If you don't know much about the group it's a good insight into how diverse a group of people they are. The live show is quality, rolling through most of the album with ease. The performance is tight, highlighting how their labours have paid off. Stamina takes to the stage well, looking at ease as a front man. If you're a fan of the live show its worth checking this one.

➲ v/a - biological warfare

outbreak records 7

Resonant Evil step up on the ones and two's for this 19 track album, with 8 tracks to be released on the 'Genesis' and 'Rebirth' EP's. As expected it's darkside tearout throughout, so if you like it hard and relentless, this ones for you! Renegade Hardware resident MC Verse is becoming a well known face on the scene for MCing, but less known for his production. 'North Star' sees him teaming up with Loxy, and doing some dancefloor damage. There's some tasty remixes like the Dylan & Mason 'Bass Kick' remix or Tech Itch's 'Possession' remix, as well as some older favourites like 'Need U' and 'California Curse'. As expected the album's deep down dark and nasty, so if you're a fan of the label you're gonna love this!

➲ pish posh - in the red

timelapse audio 7

Pish Posh, AKA DJ Wally, is a name you might not be to aware of. You probably don't know, but he was the geezer behind the Drum n Bass division of Rawkus Records - Rawkuts. 'In The Red' is a showcase of America's finest producers, with track coming from headz like Gridlok, Garon, Arquer and Evol Intent to name a few. The mixing is seamless, and the tune selection is tight with a lot of sinister rollers. There's a thick trancey feel to this album, and if you're a fan of the Black Sun Empire sound then your gonna love this. All in all it's a good mix.

➲ dj clever - troubled waters

offshore recordings 7

American based DJ Clever was first bitten by the jungle bug when he visited London for a semester of his college course. After rising through the ranks of his hometown Connecticut he moved to NYC where he scored a job in the Big Apple's most famous record shop, Breakbeat Science, and soon became their record buyer. 'Troubled Waters' is a journey through the leftfield side of D&B that his co-owned label (OSR) is renowned for. The track listing features artists like Paradox ('I Get a Kickback'), Fracture and Neptune ('Normality Complex') and Pieter K ('Rapport') to name a few. The mixing is seamless, and the breaks are constantly morphing keeping things interesting. There's a thick slice of future soul running throughout and if you're a big fan of your breaks you should definitely check this one.

➲ nucleus & paradox - esoteric funk

reinforced records 7

It's been a good year for this duo who have been at the forefront of the breaks revival. It's been a long wait since their last LP 'Transmographication' which was released in 1995. 'Esoteric Funk' comes in two formats; an 11 track CD and a 3 piece vinyl with 8 tracks, which will include some 'sample me' breaks. The album is sees the pair flexing a lot of different styles with some down tempo tracks as well as the their usual drumfunk dancefloor sound. If you like your deep dubby basslines and your breaks then it's well worth checking this out.

➲ ratpack - the history

rumour records 8

The Old-Skool Dons release a well overdue CD that covers their dance music history. The dangerous duo met back in 1985 when Mark was beat boxing and Everson was a DJ for the Locomotion Sound System. Acid house touched down, and as they say, the rest is history. The double CD features all their hits, with one CD playing the tracks from start to finish, and the other in the mix with Everson's unmistakeable blend of singing and MCing, like "Skin skinner, who's got the wheel to my clipper!". All the classics feature, like 'Searchin For My Rizla', 'Tra La La Boom' and 'The Clipper'. Widely recognised as dance music's first DJ & MC partnership, this CD shows why they've cut the mustard a producers as well. Tracks like 'Higher' show the drumwork which defined an era, and tracks like 'Captain Of The Ship' express the party atmosphere that ravin was all about. The mix is pure vibes, and if you've seen 'em live it's spot on with their act. The mix runs through their hits with some remixes of their tracks from the likes of Rhythm Masters and Ellis Dee before finishing off with the chilled 'Ain't No Sunshine'. Whether you're an Old-Skool head or a Grime loving 13 year old, you could all do with this history lesson!

eclectic

➲ v/a - meat katie: bedrock breaks

bedrock breaks 8

Mark Pember is Meat Katie, one of the premiers in the breaks world and establishes this here. CD1 sees him cover many styles, from Dogzilla's killer techy 'Big Chat' , to spacey Santos 'Sabot', Rennie Pilgrim broody 'Jacknife' and thumper 'Why Me?' from Force Mass Motion with its acid coastal flava. Dylan Rhyme's 'Panic Button' is rather abstract, followed by a hot Christian J remix of Walker Hintenaus's 'Pinrose' ended with the blistering tech future funk of a rework of Aphasia's 'Acapulco'.

Disc 2 sees District's bleepy 'Feel this Thing' on his native Kingsize, followed by a Meat Katie and Christian J collaboration 'Turn Me Out' - the Kathy Brown vocal, and fully cleared, will be massive. La Liga's 'Out in London' is dancefloor ammo, and Katie's remix of Namtrak enforces his tech sound to us. Coombs and Katies 'Import' which has a cinematic feel. Sons of Slough track is a little weak, but back in with Andy Page vs George Clinton 'Elementalelectrofunk' which is a right little groover, ended with some 80's feel electro from EK. Well worth checking if 'tech-funk' breaks are your game. PV

➲ shoulder to shoulder - envoy

soma 9

The follow up to awesome 'Where There's Life' debut LP, Hope Grant returns with a smasher, between tech-house and house, with a pinch of electronic soul. From the minimal '4Absent Friends' a relaxed soulful electronic cut, 'Red Mist' is harder and has a 'Fade to Grey' flick to it. Hope flexes his vocal cords in 'Move On' in a electro soul boogie, with lush strings and a singalong chorus. Class. 'Into the Arena' is angry tech, and the title track sees some lyrics again, but in more of a clubby manner. 'Is This…' is uplifting dancefloor fodder, tastefully done. 'U Can Go' is slightly weak and retro flavoured, but 'Stargazer' is electronic lushness, an exercise in vocal tech minimalism. There is no bad track here. Shockingly good. Soma – simply bossing it. PV

➲ vanessa freeman - shades

chillifunk 6

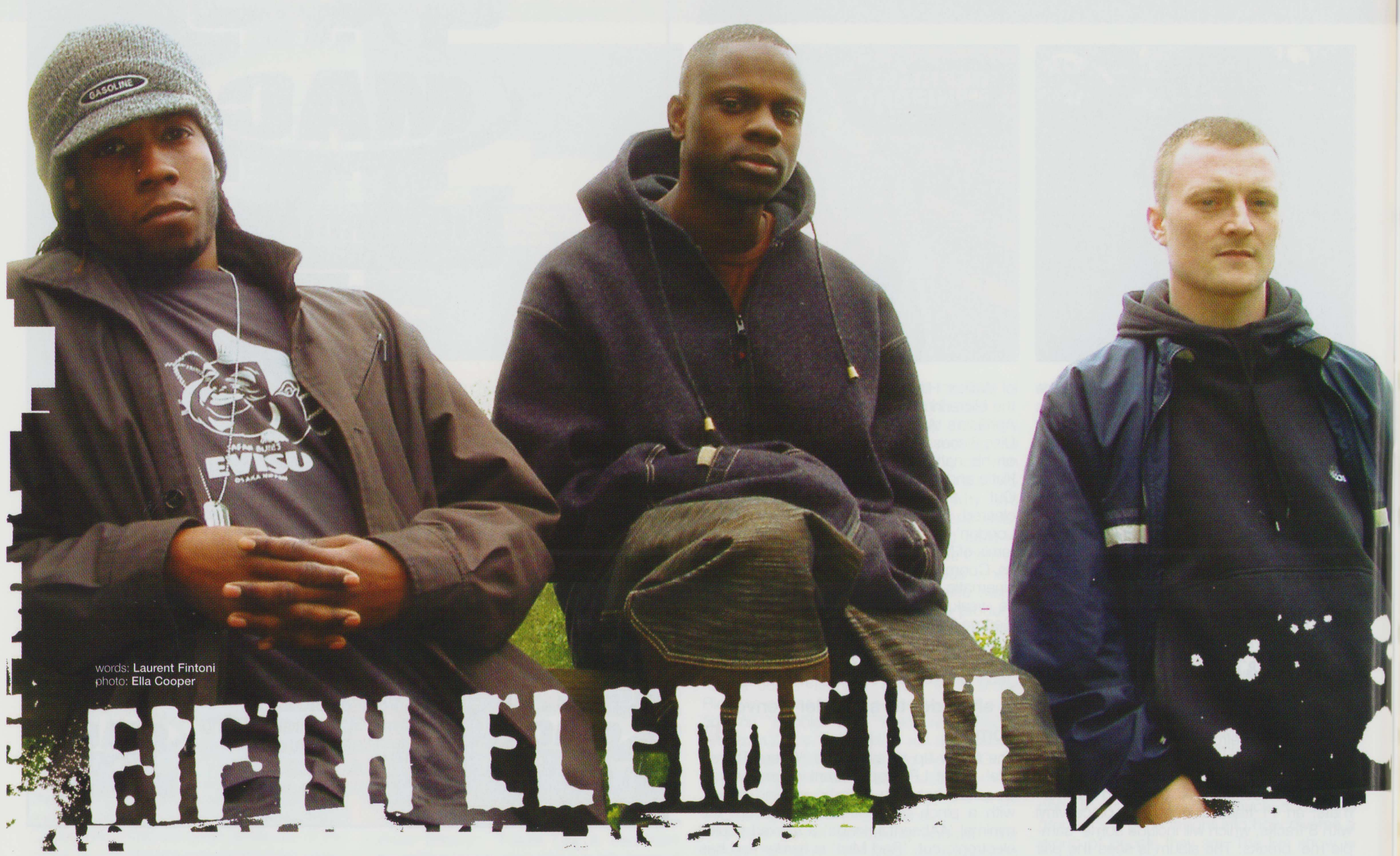
Finally the soul/jazz/funk vocalist releases her solo project, produced by Phil Asher. Working with Nathan Haines and Kyoto Jazz Massive, Freeman has shone brightly. Opening with 'Show Me' Freeman exercises good poise to cut a soulful gem. 'The Way' exudes that Asher funk gloss, 'Dawning of a New Day' has a more urban feel. 'Hang Tight' is good soul downtempo. The title track stands out and total reflects her ethic, smooth vocals, on a minimal funky backing. 'This Love' has an overly funky backing. The last few tracks are a bit weak 'Lifeline' has a rock feel, and comes off as poorly. 'Fresh and Wild' is bland, 'Notice Me' is overly cinematic, and'Veronique' has no vocals is just Asher getting all retrofunked out. Starts well but finishes weakly. Seeing her live I know that Freeman could do better than this. PV

breaks

➲ deekline - break, beats & blondes

botchit & scarper 8

Nick 'Deekline' Annand and Greg 'Wizard' Fleming much vaunted debut, succeeds in its mission of rising out of the breaks scene to a much broader audience. Their first album is loaded with an infectious confidence where overground sensibilities collude with a depth of street knowledge, with the contributions of vocalists Yolanda and Spoonface a big part in the reconnection of the more usually disparate sub-genre's of house, breaks and electro. Punchy. (KM)



words: Laurent Fintoni
photo: Ella Cooper

FIFTH ELEMENT

Drum & Bass and Hip Hop have always been closely linked. The genres borrow heavily off each other, and the cultures' history are both intertwined, with Hip Hop having provided a nurturing background for many a DnB DJ and producer over the years. Yet after nearly 10 years, a hybrid of both genres has never really emerged, even if it has been attempted many times over, from Goldie to Photek via Danny Breaks.

Step in 5th Element, a crew composed of Marbles, Torment (better known to most as Loxy and Ink), Keyz, Midas and Jdub whose aim is to finally bring both genres together into a hybrid that they hope will catch onto the ears of the listeners both in and out of these respective scenes. I had the chance to catch up with three of the Elements in North London this month, as Midas and Jdub were unable to attend, and find out what they have in store for us.

The 5th Element project came about following an earlier attempt by Ink and Loxy to put together a collective of people and fuse the sounds of Hip Hop and DnB. As Ink explains they were always into Hip Hop from day one and had thought of putting a crew together for a while. This first attempt, which went by the name of School of Mad Thoughts, never really took off, mainly due to Ink and Loxy's ever-demanding DnB schedule both behind the desk and the decks. This was in '99, and a few years later their work on an LP for Architecture Records called "Can You Draw Sound?" would bring back to life their original fusion concept. As they were putting the finishing touches to the last track on the album, Loxy started to freestyle and both got the idea of adding lyrics to it. And so they rounded up some more people, including MC Verse and AD, Sway, Keyz and Midas, to put on the track, which in turn led to their first single as Fifth Element.

The success of the single cemented their belief that now was the time to seriously work on a project that could finally create a fusion of both genres, but with a British touch to it. The addition of Keyz and Midas, on vocals, and Jdub on production to the already winning combination that is Loxy and Ink, means that 5th Element are a crew to be reckoned with both lyrically and musically. After setting up the foundation for their work with the 'Instinct' 12", they have moved onto their album, which will see the light of day at the end of the year. Asked to define their sound, Ink replies 'Dru Hop', which really encompasses their want to create the ultimate fusion of both genres, in a way that they believe has never been attempted before. "If you think about it", Ink explains "no one has really done it before, not in a true UK style anyway. The closest is probably the Goldie and KRS ONE collaboration, and that goes back nearly 10 years now."

So how are the duties shared in the studio when you have three talented producers on board? "We work together, and on our own and we will bring the results to the table and finish it together" Loxy says. "It can be just as difficult either way but we always make sure that we do our best, especially when working on a more Hip Hop beat. With the amount of stuff out today, and the bad rep that UK Hip Hop has had for years, we are very conscious that anything we bring out has to be 110%." The main thing Ink stresses is to keep a good balance between the productions and the rhymes, so that there isn't a lack of quality on either side. It's true that most urban music out today suffers heavily from a poor balance between vocals and productions.

Which brings us to the vocal side of the project, which might not be anything new as such for the DnB community, especially with the recent rise of MC groups. But they do offer something slightly different in that their vocal styles are varied and nicely compliment each other, whilst hopping between the more posed and lyrical Hip Hop vibes and the speedier, chattier needs of a DnB beat. The fact that Ink and Loxy are part of the collective as both MCs and producers is more than just a gimmick though, it's another outlet for their creativity. As with the production the lyrical work is shared, and Keyz explains "we all hear a beat, get it, work on it on our own or together and then put it all down in the studio. And most of the time when we aren't together, we find that the lyrics fit with each other without us having to rework them." This ability to make their work fit without much communication comes from their knowledge and respect of each other and is yet another sign that they are striving for more than just an attempt at cashing in on what can be seen as a trend in both musical genres to fuse styles, but not necessarily well.

There are also a few guests on the album, including MCs Verse and AD who were part of the first 12" as well as a female singer from North Carolina called Kat, who features on one track which Ink describes as having "the most crossover potential". So don't be surprised if the boys come running through the charts later on in the year! On the production side there are appearances from Damage and Austrian wonder D.Kay. The origins of his collaboration also reside in the 'Can You Draw Sound?' LP, as Ink was over in Vienna to work with him on a track for that album. "We started work on another track while I was there, which I took back with me and pulled out for this project. Basically we just took the track as it was and halved its speed, making it fit in perfectly with the sound we wanted for this project."

So it's looking good for the future as they finish the album and get ready to go on the road and promote it to the fullest, with a show that will probably leave a few people shaking their heads in disbelief at the sight of two established producers getting wild on the mic. The live shows will serve as a way to introduce Loxy and Ink to the public as MCs as well as bring out the rest of the collective. With Jdub on the decks and the four of them on stage you can be sure to expect some top quality entertainment. With their ability to switch between genres and styles, the live shows will surely prove their point further. And as has already been exemplified in the last few years, the Hip Hop and DnB crowd share a common love for the breaks, something that can only play into the hands of 5th Element.

The next step for them is the second single, 'Dru Hop Music', which should be out by the summer, with a Shy FX and others as yet unconfirmed remixes. The LP should be out by the autumn and the live show will be rolling into a town near you in the summer giving people a taste of things to come. All of this will be released on their own Dru Hop Music label, which will in turn and in time be used as a foundation to bring other people through. It's all elementary really.

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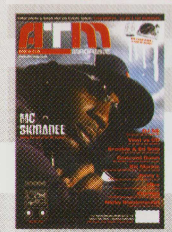

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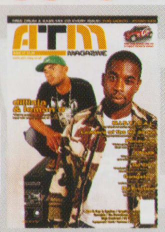

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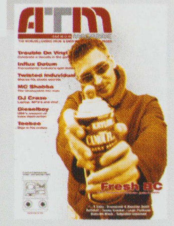

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MEAT KATIE

words: Paul Vig

"Meat Katie comes from a film, a 70's porn film" explains Mark Pember, aka Meat Katie "They were two words that really shouldn't go together, and that was that" he adds with a wry chuckle. This DJ / Producer is amazingly down to earth - the conversation gets lengthy as ATM catches up with one of breakbeat's biggest names, who spins and makes a blend of tech, tribal and funky beats.

32 year old Pember was born in Fulham, and now resides in Kingston, south west London. He is very much a family man and lives with his girlfriend and two girls – a 4 year old and their recent addition - 14 week old baby. He grew up with his Mum's "bad taste in music "– being exposed to Dr Hook, Dire Straits, but also Blondie and Police. Living in Surrey, he fell out of school age 15, and ended up working in a toaster factory. He first discovered hip hop age 14 and then took a like for the manner in which the beat was constructed - liking breaks from funk and jazz bands. He admits he is a big Prince fan, choosing Dennis Brown as a hero in reggae, and for soul, name checks Roberta Flack.

The member of a skate-punk band in his late teens, he played the bass guitar. "It was straight punk - we were managed by Sean McClusky" Being friends with Dub Pistols Keith Tenniswood's girlfriend, things moved from there too. "I used to go to lots of clubs - Love Ranch, Midnight Cowboy, and the Drum Club, and sort of got into the vibe, and started playing around with beats"

His first release was on Wall of Sound – over 11 years ago – "Yeah, it really sold well" he states still in a rather surprised manner, and goes on to tell me about the Avenue A moniker he recorded for the defunct Belgian imprint R&S in 1995.

Calling the music he makes "Tech-funk" rather then breaks, he quickly adds "It's not more than breaks, or anything, it just incorporates different elements" in case I thought he was adding any pretension that his music was above others. "I like tech-house and breaks, I like to make all sorts, kind of an amalgamation of all sounds - you could call it" and Pember sees himself much more a musician than a programmer. "The DJing came later I just wanted to hear the stuff I liked, and it came simply from that, with a bit of practice"

Pember is currently interested in breaks artists, some of whom are his friends: Ramirez, Elite Force, Lee Coombs, Dylan Rhymes and Christian J. His co-owned Whole Nine Yards label hasn't had any output for sometime, after its inception 6 years ago. "Its kinda on the back burner - it's not dead, but now I have Lot 49". His new label has seen a few releases, no major signings as yet, but is taking it 12" by 12". The next release will be Dylan Rhymes 'The Way' with an Evil 9 remix due early June.

He has completed two artist albums – signing to Kingsize eight years ago, and is rather attached to the imprint. He feels there is no need stray to another label, or a major, "It's like being in a relationship with someone – you don't just ditch them because something better comes along" he adds firmly, Pember surely seems a man not motivated by money. The label also allows him freedom to do collaborations with anyone he chooses, so in many ways the respect is reciprocated.

Asked by Bedrock Breaks' head honcho John Digweed to do a breaks mix, after the previous successful offerings by DJ Hyper. He was rather chuffed being asked and has risen to the task admirably, and the mixing is absolutely precise. The first disc sees him cover many styles, from Dogzilla's killer techy 'Big Chat', to spacey Santos 'Sabot', Rennie Pilgrims broody 'Jacknife' and thumper 'Why Me?' from Force Mass Motion with its acid coastal flava. Dylan Rhyme's 'Panic Button' is rather abstract, followed by a hot Christian J remix of Walker Hintenaus's 'Pinrose' ended with the blistering tech future funk of a rework of Aphasia's 'Acapulco'

Disc 2 sees District open the account with the bleepy 'Feel this Thing' on his native Kingsize, followed by a Meat Katie and Christian J collaboration 'Turn Me Out' – the Kathy Brown vocal, and fully cleared, will be massive. La Liga's 'Out in London' is powerful dancefloor ammo, and Katie's remix of Namtrak enforces his tech sound to us, then into Coombs and Katies 'Import' which has an impressive cinematic feel. The Sons of Slough track is a little weak, but back in with Andy Page vs George Clinton 'Elementalelectrofunk' which is a right little groover, ended with some 80's feel electro from EK.

In what spare time he has he likes to spend it with his two kids, and likes to spend time at home. As a DJ he is solidly booked – "every weekend in I seem to be somewhere in Europe" he says slightly begrudgingly. A US tour has been planned soon, and he has travelled the world over - he returns for a tour of Australia in December, but only after spending time at his baby's first Christmas.

Finding little time to check clubs in his own time he makes a point to see Lee Coombs on the wheels of steal, but adds he will take some time to go and see techno wizard Richie Hawtin when he's in London next. He is still a resident at Leeds' Mint Club at the Technique night, originally more of a a bar night, which now sees in 900-1000 every fortnight. This has been going on for around a year. "It's a great night" Pember enthuses.

He still enjoys playing at Fabric Live on Friday every few weeks, and remembers Stompafunk in Brighton being top rate. Of late he's got a thing for Natural in Madrid on Thursday – he seems to be amazed at how up for it the Spaniards are on a weeknight. Of his world highlights, he has had some great nights in the AmBar in Perth. "The breaks scene is really massive there" he will tell you, and that "The Import Club in Poland is really kicking too."

He still has diverse tastes in music – he tells me of how he was listening to a Sade tape in his car that morning. "I just like music" he says, and you know he means it. He feels the breaks scene is not bad, but is slightly frustrated by the fact "Breaks are still seen as background music in the UK" and that "often Breaks DJ's are sidelined to the backroom on a night"

Pember also feels UK Breakbeat has fragmented over recent times, into various factions - "You have the Aquasky, and Mutiny type of vibe – the fast tempo, which is huge in Spain: the stripped down Coombs and Ramirez kind of techy sound, then the Krafty Kuts funk with Rennie Pilgrim, the Plumps, Fingerlickin crew." He carefully explains, "and now there's more progressive style coming through - Luke, Jon Lyle, and the Ragga influenced sound from Freq Nasty and the Freestylers"

Pember doesn't seem phased by all this and just says he will play the music he likes – from any of these camps, and beyond: it has got him this far, and I am sure he will remain one of the best on the circuit for quite some time.

Bedrock Breaks 3 double CD mixed by Meat Katie is out now on Bedrock Breaks.